

of C  
n Re  
y Fac

# The Man in the Camlet Cloak



Q. P. 2d  
/ 100











There just off the path, sound asleep with her head  
pillowed against a tree trunk, was the daintiest,  
most wonderful creature I had ever seen.

# THE MAN IN THE CAMLET CLOAK

BEING AN OLD WRITING  
TRANSCRIBED AND EDITED

BY

CARLEN BATESON



*ILLUSTRATED*

BY

W. HERBERT DUNTON

AKRON, OHIO

£ £ £ THE SAALFIELD 2 2 2  
PUBLISHING COMPANY

CHICAGO

1903

NEW YORK



COPYRIGHT, 1903,

BY

THE SAALFIELD PUBLISHING COMPANY

MADE BY  
THE WERNER COMPANY  
AKRON, OHIO

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

---

	PAGE
There just off the path, sound asleep with her head pillowed against a tree trunk, was the daintiest, most wonderful creature I had ever seen <i>Frontispiece</i>	
"Give it back, I have promised, I have sworn" . .	80
Then through the smoke, I heard the landlord's voice calling Eboli . . . . .	160
And shot out into midstream . . . . .	240







# THE MAN IN THE CAMLET CLOAK

## CHAPTER I

THE ensuing narrative of the conspiracy of Aaron Burr, early in the century, is here set down, fact by fact, according to the personal knowledge of me, Ezra Wilbur, early settler and old inhabitant of the town of Marietta.

There is a Latin saying which I would insert at this point, could I recall its wording, for it was most pertinent and would have given my tale a scholarly flavor at the outset. My father used it once effectively in describing an Indian incursion. According to him it was the fine famous line, with which Virgil begins his description of Troy's overthrow, its burden being:

“I myself saw these things and had a big hand in them.”

'Tis nothing so great wrought into rock English, but there is a mysterious alchemy

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

about a foreign tongue that does transmute a simple statement into gold for world-wide currency. Such as it is, it will serve as my excuse, for I myself did see, more intimately than any one now living, the workings of the Burr conspiracy and the causes of its failure.

It has become the fashion of late to tell what one has to tell without comment or personal reference. But in the days of which I write, 'twas the part of politeness along the Ohio river, before singing a song, or relating an adventure, or exhibiting one's skill with gun or sword to plead in advance one's own incompetence. I tender my apologies therefore, in accordance with the customs of early Marietta, for this story of mine—though as it is the truth it really needs none; and were it a compound of fiction it would need none either, being a fair interesting story. Sure, it does have all the requisites, a hero and a lovely heroine—two heroines, one might say. Moreover, it has a full half dozen villians, headed by that General Wilkinson who was Burr's confederate; and a plot, which, thanks to them, not to me, is better than I have e'er found between the covers of a novel.

There is a romance in it too, which I have unpacked for the occasion out of the lavender leaves and pretty smells of some thirty years ago. I have tried to weave it into my tale merrily, making a lightly skipping narrative,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

with the sobs left out and the heart-breaks muffled so that they might not hunt the tender sensibilities of the reader.

If I have ill succeeded, it is because I have lived much alone where Nature is desperately immense and serious. One loses the faculty of jocoseness in the forest, face to face with the dead-deeps of the universe, where an unsteeped sky-line sets a man solitary in the center and measures off vacant creation all around him. If then, the romance should sometimes have a hint of hopeless things, of cries that die away unanswered, and love that comes to naught, and those everlasting problems which will go unsolved to the end—why, turn the page there, sirs and damsels, and I'll promise you a gayer chapter just ahead.

With which preliminary bugle-toot by way of argument, I will hie on to my task.

I was a native of Massachusetts, one of that first company of New Englanders, who, under the leadership of General Rufus Putnam, drifted down the Ohio in 1788 on the flatboat Mayflower II., and began at Marietta to hew a new state out of the wilderness. With the later influx of Southerners and Irish refugees, a Massachusetts birth certificate counted for almost the same as a college diploma. However, I was only a lad at the time of the second Mayflower's pilgrimage and it may be that I lost something in the transplanting. Boy and



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

man, I had always the name of being a thick-headed fellow, who made amends for his stupidity only by his courage and good-nature.

My father possessed so much learning that I infer mother must have been a sad scholar. She died in my infancy, leaving me in charge of my sister, Ancy Ann. It was a keen enough head that Ancy Ann had; the shrewish tongue ever wagging in it early taught me, what father seemed always to have known—the folly of contending with a woman. Father was an easy man with a sense of humor that contributed not a little to the success of the *Marietta Weekly Sentinel*, of which paper he was proprietor. I well recall his sly smile of amused tolerance as he would draw me away from Ancy's domain and over to the printing office, which he called "the MacGregors' native heath"; not that it was a heath, but from the circumstance, as near as I could make out, of there being a heath somewhere in Scotland where the MacGregors, down-trodden elsewhere, were the lords.

It is like enough we undervalued Ancy Ann, for she was a marvelous manager and without her, though we might have taken life more pleasurably, I doubt if we had prospered much materially. She held the purse, drove the bargains, regulated our personal habits, and supervised our tasks, taking care that we had no more leisure than she allowed herself. In

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

time, she married—a widower with a small child. Her husband was killed not long after in an Indian raid. She then came back to us and our life went on in much the old channels except for little Thankful, the tiny step-daughter, whom she brought with her. Fired like us with a desire to escape Ancy Ann's territory, Thankful invaded the printing office and set herself up as chief of the MacGregors.

Not long thereafter, I enlisted in the Army of the West under the command of General James Wilkinson and, what is more pertinent to this tale, I then fell in with Jared Dalrymple. Jared was a careless, happy-go-lucky fellow, brave as I at my best and bold, besides, where I was bashful. "Carry things through with a rush before opposition can bestir itself,"—that was his motto. Acting up to it, he outdrank the men, kissed the maids and got himself called a very daredevil from his disposition to plunge into dangers, just, as it seemed, for the practice of scrambling out unharmed. I can see him yet, as he appeared in those long gone days with his graceful figure, his flashing blue eyes, and reddish hair that shone like real gold in the sunlight. So perfectly did his beauty match with his dash and daring, that my heart went out to him like any girl's. Ah well, Ancy Ann was sore set against him, but my hero Jared ever was and shall be till I die.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

However, of the two, I was the better soldier. Jared still calls me Cassius at times, because I once said so, which is some nonsense of his. Indeed I did have a wonderful aptitude at galloping wherever I was ordered and doing to the letter whatever I was told; whereas Jared was hampered by his brilliant wits and a certain faculty of thinking up marvelous thoughts. Nor was he ever slow in arguing their merits to his superiors. No plan of campaign was so good but he strove to better it. Though a private, he was bound to play captain. He questioned the infallibility of shoulder-straps and refused to be reduced by any severity to a mere fighting machine; so that, even with our lax discipline, he became as noted for the insubordination that prompted his exploits as for the genius that made them successful. But most of all, he was against the General. Spain owned Louisiana then and was showing her teeth at us over the Mississippi like a dog guarding a bone. It was whispered about the ranks even then that Wilkinson was at heart a traitor, drawing a pension from the court at Madrid all the while that he was head of the United States Army, and only waiting a seasonable opportunity to surrender his command to Spain.

Jared insisted from the first that these rumors were true. He told me of cipher writings, of secret conferences held at Frankfort, Cincinnati, and Detroit between Wilkinson and the Spanish



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

officers; and of how "mule-loads and horse-loads" of gold came from Mexico to pay our commander for his double dealing. There was a Philip Nolan, a Texas man, who was agent or go-between in these doings, and it may have been through knowing and observing him that Jared got his convictions. At all events, he was for ferreting the matter out and fastening Wilkinson's treachery upon him. A pretty muddle he got us into for his pains—for the only visible result of his efforts was to prevent our promotion, render our service onerous, and make us conscious in a hundred ways that we had incurred the General's enmity.

Our terms of enlistment in time were over and Jared and I lost track of one another. When I returned home, father was ailing, already far gone on his last sickness. A gay, kind man he was always. I would he had lived to figure in this narrative for he would have distinguished it greatly and added a round hundred to its circulation.

At his death, I took possession of the *Sentinel* and farm in my own right and set up for one of Marietta's leading citizens. Our town had grown during my absence into the social center of the West. This was largely due to the advent among us of Harman Blennerhassett, an Irish millionaire, who had bought an island some fourteen miles down the river and built the palace of the continent on

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

it. Into its parlors, his wife gathered the first families of the neighborhood at many a stately ball, especially when Aaron Burr, the ex-Vice-president, was her guest.

We were of the aristocracy, and Ancy Ann found much relish in such assemblages. For myself, I was little adapted to drawing-rooms with my blunt soldier's way of always speaking truths and my contempt, which I could never quite veil, for a dancing man. Ancy Ann barred me away from the taverns in her desire to rehabilitate my moral nature, which she felt had suffered sadly during my campaigning. At home, there were only herself and little Thankful, who being older, was to my mind more vexatious and arbitrary than ever, albeit I felt a brotherly tenderness toward her, shielding her from my sister's sternness and surreptitiously providing her with sundry sweetmeats and knick-knacks.

So it was that, as the years went by, I grew more and more restless and lonesome and eager for another glimpse of Jared.

# The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

## CHAPTER II

IN THOSE days, I often thought of selling the *Sentinel*, making some provision for Ancy Ann and Thankful and adventuring forth into the far West toward Fort Wayne. 'Twas but an ill knack I had at editing.

Sitting in my office one evening, I was planning the matter, adding a year or two to Thankful's age and giving her a husband who would make a home for my sister and leave me the untrammelled man I was in the old soldier days. Thankful herself interrupted me. She had a grievance which ran after this fashion. The Blennerhassetts were to give a party in honor of Aaron Burr and his daughter, Theodosia, and Thankful, though bidden to it, was not allowed by Ancy Ann to go.

"The invitation came through Mr. Burr himself," she said. "You know, when he saw me about here yesterday, he called me a beauty. Am I really a beauty, Ezra?"

I never to this day should commend Thankful's looks, though Jared and others have shaken my first views on them. Nor did I set much store by Aaron Burr's opinion. His pleasant speeches, I suspected, were merely meant to overcome the hostility which the *Sentinel*, as a Federalist organ, showed toward



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

him because of the death of Hamilton at Weehawken. Why, he had even pronounced my sister a handsome lady and me a brilliant editor.

"How do I know?" I said curtly—the thing mattered so little. "Beauties are supposed to have dimples and curls and red cheeks and blue eyes. Look into the glass for yourself and see if you have them. If you do, it is like you're a beauty."

"Mommy says the parties at the Island are for matrons and elderly dames. If I were married now, or even betrothed it would be different."

This was in line with my own thoughts before she had disturbed me, and I hastened to agree.

"Perhaps you had best marry. You are getting old, sissy. So many settlers are coming down the river that women are a rarity. It's possible some one would take you; at least—"

"I'm turned fifteen, if you call that old; and I'll turn twenty, yes, thirty, before I'll e'er take up with a common woodchopping settler. It will be a full ten years till I reach the age of mommy when she married—"

"Slow, sissy. Mind father's maxim, 'If you cannot speak well of the absent, say naught.'"

"I said no more behind her back than you did to my face. You told me I was getting old."

"I only meant—you will get old."

"Perhaps—I will."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"You will, sissy; and as you get old, you will get ugly, and as you get ugly, the bucks will pass you out. And so—"

"And so I had best betroth myself at once." After some thought, Thankful added, cuddling up beside me:

"I'll tell you, Ezra. You are not really my relation. If you don't mind, I'll be betrothed to you. Then I can go to balls and wear long gowns and you shall buy me a necklace like Theodosia Alston's."

"To—me!" I started away and stared at her from a distance. "The Lord help us, child, I shall never marry."

"Who wants you to? I only said 'betrothed.' Didn't I say 'betrothed'? For a husband, I shall choose a slender, courtly man with a knack at pretty wordings. It is probable that if you'd be my lover for awhile and take me out among the great folks, I could find one just to my liking, a congressman or officer or other personage really worth the marrying. Though of course if I didn't and grew old and ugly, as you say, I could take you after all."

That was very fine and I began to see my folly in yielding to her all those years. She argued and wept and scolded and pled and feared that she wasn't a beauty at all since I was so loth to consent. I knew by long experience that there would be no peace ahead for

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

me till she had her desire. So I finally told her that she might call me her betrothed, and promised her the necklace on strict condition that she bestir herself for some one to supplant me. But when she wanted a good-night kiss, I flatly refused to give it. She had somehow taken herself out of childish ranks and I determined to have no more truck with her caressings.

I had supposed that Ancy Ann, at the first intimation she had of the matter, would put an end to it, but it transpired that she had planned for this very result. As she expected to remain a widow and spend her days between us, she explained, she had dreaded equally my wife and Thankful's husband. Moreover she was for marrying us at once, lest we change our minds, arguing that though Thankful was young, she herself would be with us to direct our house and bring up our children.

One evening not long after, I was pondering the affair disconsolately enough when who but Jared Dalrymple should happen in upon me. When I saw him once again, blue-eyed, curly-haired and handsome as ever, I welcomed him most effusively, patting his shoulder and saying many silly, unmanly things no doubt.

For an hour or so, in reminiscence, we lived over the past. We lay on our backs at midnight, as of yore, in the forest depths—a pair of youths wondering what life had in store for them. We fell in again with the river pirates

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

down below Kaskaskia and once more arrested the great chief, Black Pigeon, out of his own wigwam, the two of us against a tribe.

"Wilkinson thought we would never come back, when he sent us on that errand. He'd learned David's trick of putting undesirable persons in the battle's forefront. I wonder if he's yet forgotten to hate us? Ah, Ezra, those were fine, perilous times, a constant seesaw with death and danger. Who wants a monotonous prairie stretch of life ahead, waiting to be traveled? Dash along by days—that's more exciting—never knowing what's around the bend, or how soon the cliff will come over which you'll break your neck."

I asked longingly if he were to stay in Marietta, the while my heart beat wildly at the recollections that he brought me.

"Faith, 'twas my purpose. I heard you had turned editor—old Ezra an editor," and his laughter was so merry that I minded not being the object of it. "It will never do, Ezra. I saw a copy of your paper up at Chillicothe and—it will never do. For your subscribers' sake, I came post haste to relieve you, with your permission, of this editing. If you will give your own wits a furlough and print what I write, the *Sentinel* will be the best sheet west of the Alleghanies.

'We'll take for our motto, the words "Do and dare";  
Tiffin forever and down with St. Clair.'



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Oh, don't tell me all Marietta is against Governor Tiffin, Tom Jefferson, and the Virginia Junto.\* It is the party that made us a state and under me the *Sentinel* will have to support it."

Jared had always a merry way of appropriating my possessions whenever it suited him and there was an engaging finality about his methods that disarmed argument. He now caught up a tablet and scribbled a blazing impeachment of our Federalist standard-bearer while I was yet protesting against such base change of front in the *Sentinel*.

"There! We will print that to-morrow," he said when he had finished. "If your leader be not a knave already, this will so convince him his only forte is knavery, that he will turn rascal on the instant."

Jared, as ever, had his way, and the *Sentinel* did prosper prodigiously under his management. For the rest, I misdoubt we made a wild pair and well deserved Ancy Ann's scoldings. As I said at starting, I was a good soldier, short on originality, but long on courage and obedience. Give me but a pair of heels ahead and, lead the road where it will, nor

---

\*"Virginia Junto"—the name given by the Federalists to the Democratic-Republican party of Ohio, Governor Tiffin and most of its leaders being Virginians. Marietta was the Federalist stronghold of the state.

— C. B.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

man nor dog can follow closer or more recklessly. And so we hurried on at a great pace, Jared's being the pair of heels the while, till we reached the famous autumn of 1806.

### CHAPTER III

ONE day early in September, Edward Noyes Tiffin, the first governor of Ohio, paid a visit to our printing office. Though not of his party I well knew that he ranked among our foremost men. He had almost of his own solitary power sliced Ohio off the Northwest Territory and made it into a state; for the which, it's but fair to add, we folks of Marietta gave him no thanks. Perhaps it was because of our opposition, as a town, to his policies that he seldom came among us.

His sole mission on this occasion was to our office. He had just been telling us, or rather telling Jared, the little he knew, supplemented by the much he suspected, regarding a certain treason which was hatching in and around Marietta. We were not greatly surprised, many rumors of it being already afloat. Its promoter was Aaron Burr; and its objects, so far as an outsider could tell, were twofold: first, to make war on the Spanish provinces in America

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

and take forcible possession of them; secondly, to sever the western states from the Union and, fusing them with the aforesaid conquered provinces, to create an American empire with its capital at New Orleans.

There was something of a sentiment for secession in our, and the neighboring states even among the better class of residents. A series of articles pointing out the advantages of a separation from the East had appeared anonymously that summer in our rival Marietta paper. The articles, as we now know, were written by Blennerhassett and inspired by Burr himself—and mammoth confutations of their sophistries did Jared publish in the *Sentinel*.

“Ohio be a part of Mexico?” he cried, when the Governor had explained this pernicious plot. “Now perdition swallow this rascally Burr who would make a Mexican of Jared Dalrymple.”

Leaning on the window-sill, he had been looking far down the Belle Riviere—I call it as he did, ’twas a pet name that, for the Ohio, which he’d picked up among the French settlers at Gallipolis. He now shook his fist in the direction of the Island, where was the seat of the conspiracy, and muttered imprecations on Burr, Blennerhassett, Wilkinson, and all their allies.

“Nay,” interposed the Governor severely, “whatever you may say about the others, not

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

a word in your paper or to your townsmen against General Wilkinson. His loyalty is undoubted. He commands the United States Army and is Governor of Louisiana. True, he seems a friend of Burr's, but we officials know that the friendship is only a pretense. So far as the General meddles with the conspiracy, he does so for the undoing of the conspirers."

"I served under him," Jared said slowly, "and if conspiracy is within his reach, 'tis my opinion he will have a hand in it—unless his meddling fingers have reformed since '96. But, if you wish it, no word against him."

So, unconsulted, I watched the two discuss and outline the policy of my newspaper; nor did I wonder that so prominent a man as the Governor chose Jared for an adviser and aid. Edward Tiffin had few supporters in Marietta, Jared, since he took charge of the *Sentinel* and arbitrarily changed its politics, being the chief of them. Moreover, despite what Ancy Ann styled his "ungodly levity," he rarely spoke and never thought at random. He was seldom seen in church—Ancy Ann believed he thought the devil a member of the Trinity—but for religion, law, and order he had deep, abstract reverence. Chillicothe, then the capital of Ohio, had been his home and Governor Tiffin was his idol; so that now when the Governor asked his assistance in discovering this plot of Burr's, whatever it might be, there was no limit to



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Jared's delight. He promised to organize Vigilants and frustrate the whole treason within three months.

Washington was a long ways off in those days and news traveled slowly back and forth, so that in such a crisis each state must take precautionary measures for itself. History, though it has never learned the true causes of Burr's undoing and assigns to Graham the credit that should be Jared's, will bear me out that the Ohio authorities were the first and most vigorous to act against the traitors. Indeed, although cleared by the Federal courts, Burr is to this day under indictment in our state.

The Governor listened to Jared's words with quiet satisfaction. "I think you can do it," he said at length.

"*Can* do it? Why, faith, Your Excellency said 'must' a moment ago. Where there's a 'must,' don't let us thrash about with 'cans.' Perdition swallow Jared Dalrymple himself if he let any man remodel him into a Mexican."

Jared's patriotism was of so aggressive a type that it ever got the better of his prudence. I have already told of the trouble he made us by his efforts to expose General Wilkinson's attempts at treason in the last years of the previous century. Yet despite that experience, he was now as keen as ever to set himself in opposition to mighty and unscrupulous enemies.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Still his confidence was that of a man accustomed to overcome rather than overlook obstacles, and it is like he scented the tangle of plots and counterplots in front of us.

That evening when we were alone, he said to me:

"Let us look over our premises, Ezra. This Irishman, Blennerhassett, comes to America. He is ambitious—at least his wife is—and he is a dolt besides, a fit tool for the crafty. Premise Number One."

I nodded. He was used to talk at, rather than to me and seldom demanded responses.

"Premise Number Two is a certain Aaron Burr, his term out as Vice-president, ruined politically. He is more than ambitious. He is desperate for power and glory—and a brilliant man, Ezra, a wondrous, dazzling, brilliant man."

"And General Wilkinson?" I added, for I was most interested in him.

"General Wilkinson—head of the United States Army, Burr's bosom comrade, and the trickiest man that ever wore a uniform. For years he has been in the pay of Spain. I know it if the Governor doesn't. Whether he is ambitious for distinction like the others, I can't say, but sure, he is greedy. If power and glory do not appeal to him, money does; and a very Machiavelli is he for depths of plotting. However this conspiracy ends, Wilkinson, I'm afraid, will come out with his feet on firm ground."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

At this I shook my head, not being up to that time so sure as Jared of the General's knavery.

"The brilliant desperado comes West," Jared continued presently, "and meets the ambitious dolt. Governor Tiffin thinks the two are conspiring to break up the United States and found an empire. The thought, at first glimpse, looks a wild one, doesn't it? But who knows? There is dissatisfaction this side of the Alleghanies and distrust of the East. The future is bound to unite us if we can only tide over the present and keep ourselves one nation till it comes. Conditions will change. New Orleans won't always be a better capital for us than Washington, but I can see, any economist can see, that it is so to-day. The Mississippi is our natural highway instead of the Pennsylvania wagon-road. That is what makes the trouble. You see people will always look to their own interests rather than to the interests of their unborn children. A cent a pound on tea set us free from England and a few cents possible difference here and there on the imports from the South, may disrupt us now we are free, and spoil the magnificent republic we used to plan."

I smiled good-naturedly. Jared was something of a dreamer. At nights in our soldier's quarters long ago, he would take the United States and expand it into the most wonderful country, ranging it up beside the European

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

powers and imagining it within another century almost the equal of Spain herself.

"We hear secession talk every night in the tavern," he continued. "A leader would find followers."

"But an empire!" I protested.

"Why not? Napoleon has popularized the idea. Courts and crowns are no longer so abhorred. This scheme of Burr's is stupendous, but is any scheme more stupendous than the brain that has conceived it? He has rich supporters, Blennerhassett, Daniel Clark of Orleans—others probably. And we do know that he is enlisting men for some not over-clear purpose and building boats right here in Marietta."

"'Twill profit him naught," I answered confidently. "Blennerhassett and Daniel Clark are not rich enough to equip an army. Nor can Burr, however great he is, conquer Mexico with a handful of Marietta recruits."

"Exactly, and the assumption is that England means to help him. But beyond England," he concluded suddenly, "it is my opinion that Wilkinson himself is one of the conspirators and that he means to give over the Mississippi river posts and place the army he commands at Burr's service. I wish the Governor didn't trust so much to Wilkinson. Leave me think."

I left him. He was, as I've said, a wonderful thinker, running down and dragging out of



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

their lair thoughts that would astonish any man. I had watched him times ago and I knew now that Burr had best resign his plans and Blennerhassett husband his resources, for was not Jared puckering brows over their undoing?

### CHAPTER IV

**A**FTER the Governor's visit to us, the *Sentinel* foamed furiously against the treason. Jared banded the available men of the town into "Marietta Home Guards and Vigilants" with himself as captain. Detachments of these in canoes patrolled the Ohio river, swinging round and round Blennerhassett's Island, and making every man who passed in or out give strict account of himself.

A few honest tradesmen were searched for treasonable messages and kept a while under surveillance but so far as we could see, no attempt was made to break through the patrol. Aaron Burr, who had been a visitor at Blennerhassett's palace not a fortnight back, had now gone South. Blennerhassett himself was forbidden to leave his Island, and he retaliated by posting sentries, who kept our men from landing.

There was talk of mobbing the place, as munitions of war were suspected of being stored there, but Jared, who was as strict a

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

captain as any he had ever railed at, pronounced such impatience mutiny and disciplined it accordingly. Burr was now in Tennessee, and Jared thought nothing surer than that he must communicate with Blennerhassett.

"Capture the messengers and hold the messages," were his constant orders. "For that much we have warrant. If we proceed lawlessly we shall only earn Tiffin's condemnation and Wilkinson's interference."

In Marietta, lines of cleavage were sharply drawn. Those not openly against the treason were set down as for the treason. There was a warehouse on the river, where boats were being built and provisions stored. We had searched it without finding anything contraband, but it was under suspicion. It was there that Burr's followers congregated—those who had enlisted to go South with him—and a reckless set they were. It was claimed the expedition was merely to colonize some Texas lands of Burr's, and I doubt if any of his recruits knew or cared what deeper purpose lay beneath this ostensible one. But though the Vigilants' watch was active and efficient, the days went by with no clews to the conspiracy.

I was out hunting one day on Sassafras Hill, a wild, woody eminence about equi-distant from Marietta and Belpre. As I dawdled with my traps and snares, I was thinking most intently of my relations with Thankful which

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

were fast drawing to a focus. Six months had elapsed since our betrothal and no suitor had yet come forward to displace me. I had taken her to every party where there was any likelihood of finding an unmarried man. I had frantically recited her merits to all my associates and bought her frocks innumerable that she might always look her most attractive. But in vain. Even Jared, who professed admiration for her, held aloof from active wooing.

In justice to Thankful I should add that Marietta was too busy with conspirings to think seriously just then of courtships. The finery and my trumpeting, however, did have a pronounced effect. She was for the moment belle of the town; but she developed a provoking discernment, rejecting every lover within reason and standing out for a nobleman of Burr's new empire. I was already striving to resign myself to the inevitable, for despite Thankful's and my unwillingness, my sister was surely impelling us into a marriage.

Well, as I told myself over and over, Thankful was a wholesome lass deserving of a husband and, if none other appeared, it behooved me like a good soldier used to facing the disagreeable to muster my resolution and march bravely into the breach. Women—I was arguing in her interests that afternoon—are a helpless lot and so incapable of getting along by themselves that it becomes the duty

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

of every public-spirited man to select and provide for one of them. They are much alike too — the Lord knows the best of them aren't overly useful to a campaigning forester who has learned to cook and look after his own tent — and the choice is made wisely enough by reaching in among them and drawing one at random, as I did Thankful. Having got so far in my reflections, I called the matter settled, and gathering some sassafras for Ancy Ann's tea, set out for home.

A few paces off, I stopped in such a bewilderment and confusion as never trapper on Sassafras Hill felt before. There just off the path, sound asleep with her head pillowed against a tree trunk, was the daintiest, most wonderful creature I had ever seen. Angel or woman? I looked up involuntarily to see if she had fallen from the sky. Golden haired, pink cheeked, and all afluff with silks and laces, I groped after some comparison that would help me to comprehend her. Like a flower? Yes, she was like a flower, some vivid glowing hibiscus, to one who has seen only bouncing bets; or like a rainbow, or a sunset. Something went fluttering inside me, then caught and stopped in one ecstatic hopeless gasp. Who was she? Where did she come from?

She opened a pair of merry eyes just then, not in the least disconcerted, but with a roguish smile, quite as if she knew I was standing there.



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"They're blue," I said; then flushed to the roots of my hair, conscious of having made a more than usually senseless speech.

"('To a lover true,') she finished. "Your pardon, sir, for keeping you waiting—though you have kept me waiting this hour or more."

Now if the sight of her had left me a single wit, I would have known at this speech that she mistook me for some one else. Moreover, as she was obviously neither resident nor common tourist and as it was the conspiracy which drew all the strange birds to our town, I ought immediately to have connected her with it.

The remark is an important one and is thrown in right here for the enlightenment of the general public. Being in the main more discerning than myself and not stupefied like me with the lady's loveliness, my readers would probably suspect without it that she did mistake me for some one else and that, however you may find her at the close, she was at starting a designing woman deep in the plots of Aaron Burr. She hoodwinked me most cleverly for some little time and I would not for your own sakes, have you go on believing in her only to be undeceived as rudely as myself in the fourteenth chapter.

"'Tis no matter—my waiting," I stammered. "I'm only glad you managed to sleep so well with such a clumsy pillow."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

At this, her light laugh echoed through the forest. "You doubtless know that I am an actress, sufficiently high in the profession to call myself a tragedienne with a double n-e. Go where I will, I can not choose but all the world's a stage to me. So, when I spied you off yonder just now, I thought, 'He is headed to enter right. I will face right then and go to sleep. That will give him an effective entrance.' I was waiting for you to make your opening soliloquy."

"My—"

"It is a histrionic sin, keeping one's thoughts to one's self. You should have made some comments on me, private sentiments privately expressed, but loud enough none the less to take your audience into your confidence. In fine, what were you thinking when you came upon me just now? Those burning eye-flashes transmuted into speech, ought to make at least twenty lines as choice as ever introduced a hero."

Her talk, incomprehensible and belonging to another world, like herself, added to my wonderment. I covered my face with my hands in very pain at her beauty.

"My faith, you are paying me a compliment, albeit a silent one. I am fair—that's the proposition, isn't it?—fair past expressing?"

"You are fair," I agreed, brokenly enough. "That may be a compliment, but it looks to

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

me like a fact—an extra solemn one. Fairer than I had supposed they were made. An hour ago women were all alike and Thankful as good as any. You've taught me something, but—'tis a sad business facing the truth, when one's happiness is bound up in a sophistry."

"You would weep, actually weep, I believe, if I weren't by."

"I'd do nothing of the sort. But if custom does keep a man's lashes dry, his heart can drip tears most likely without shame to him."

"Nay, I wasn't gibing, only surprised and a little sorry that it is so serious. You are a different man than I should have expected. That's a pretty phrase, 'hearts dripping tears.' Did you make it up?"

"Lord love you, I can't make things up. I—felt it. Who are you?" I added, regardless of the fact that she'd just told me she was an actress.

"They call me 'The Pride of London,' queen, peasant, warrior-maid, Iphegenia, Mary Stuart, whatever you please. I've the fullest repertory in England. I was a princess last. Beyond that, I am—your betrothed."

"My—?"

"It is arranged so. You surely understood. The way matters may shape themselves, it is essential that I should be your betrothed."

"My—?" I repeated in a daze, while she viewed me suspiciously.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Where is your cloak?" she demanded, looking about, and in a matter-of-fact tone, as if asking for a sign and countersign.

Every man in Marietta, it is probable, had a cloak of some pattern, they being then the fashion for men's outer wear especially on dress occasions, but the mention of mine seemed irrelevant enough.

"At home, in Ancy Ann's closet. I should be a laughing stock, wearing a cloak on so warm a day; besides which, 'tis a fine, new garment fitter for meeting-house than woods."

"A wise caution," she observed, apparently satisfied, and there was a silence which I broke.

"Did you say that you—at least, it hummed into my ears from somewhere—that you were my betrothed?"

"With your permission. A lady, you see, could scarcely adventure into these wilds without a licensed defender. There is a Colonel Russel already, an officer high in the United States service, who knew me back in London, and meeting me by chance last night in Ohio suspects everything. He will make a deal of trouble until he is convinced that I came here innocently on a visit to a dear friend with an accepted lover, which is yourself, to protect me."

"Oh, I'll protect you. It's my dear delight—fighting. Fighting's still the vogue here on the river. We fight for practice when we can roust up no earnest quarrel. We are no East-



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

erners to be legislated out of duels. How will you have it? With knives—wrist-bound or cut-and-come? Or with pistols? Let this Colonel Russel, whoever he is, think twice ere he offend my betrothed—any of my betrotheds,” I added, thus conscientiously including Thankful in my protection.

“It is unsatisfactory having the betrothal before the curtain rises,” she observed. “It would make so fine a situation. There is plenty of time to begin now and work up to it artistically. You are looking volumes. Would you mind to speak a page or two? For a prompt—do you love me?”

“I’m not prepared to say—positively—never having loved any one.”

“Well, you might consider me your rightful property by virtue of your desire, and strangle me under a pillow if I showed any disposition to prefer another. That’s Othello. Does it affect you in that way?”

I shook my head. “There are finer men on every corner. I couldn’t blame you if you chose one of them.”

“Or you might feel a suicidal ecstasy over me like Romeo, and go hunting poisons the most virulent, in case I died and left you a year or two alone.”

“That’s not me, either. A plague! I had better turn to butchering hogs, which are useful dead and a cumbrance living, than myself,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

who am of some little account while the breath's in me and as useless as a bursted balloon ever afterward."

"Another style is Antony. He loves his love because she is fair. He leaves his wife for her, and his honor and manhood—everything. He turns coward for her and traitor for her. He fights her battles even against his own flag. He ruins his own life, and would, had he succeeded, have wrecked his country—just for her. He was a great lover."

"No," I objected. "She wasn't worth it. No woman is."

"She was very beautiful."

"Beauty is of no account—at least, of no so great account. It is not fair to the homely ones that it should be. He may ruin himself if he pleases—every man's his own property—but I'll not endorse him when he jeopardizes his country for a pretty face."

"Love," she said slowly, "is beyond all."

"It is not beyond the United States of America."

"What do you mean?" she asked startled.

"I don't approve this Antony, and I suspect the girl was none too good either, coquetting about with a married man. Why, look you; 'tis the same as if you were a promoter of this conspiracy and I, who am a loyal citizen working overtime to subvert it, should for your sake fall in line next behind Burr."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"That camlet cloak of yours—" she began, rising in a sudden fright.

"That—what?"

"That cloak—the cloak you said was at home in the closet."

"But 'tis not a camlet cloak. Fine imported goods from Orleans, truly, but still not camlet. On my honor, madam, though I don't see why stress should be put on its material, I have no cloak of camlet cloth."

"You say you are a loyal American. How came you here this afternoon?"

"By chance. I have been on Sassafras Hill the entire day."

"And you have seen no one else? No gentleman—no—?"

"No living person but yourself."

She sank down again with a look of terror, of utter loneliness. "I am sorely alone then, as it seems, shut off from my friends and abandoned by the only one on whom I had any right to call. I wish you loved me."

Her helplessness brought the truth out of me.

"I do, madam. Surely, madam, I do love you, though not after the manner of Antony. Can't you bring along some one who loved a maid in commoner style, without any killings and not beyond the limits of honor—she being beautiful, but without overmuch stress on it, her virtues and the white soul that shines through her eyes being her main charm? I

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

could love you like that, if you'd imagine up something of that sort."

"I can't," she answered rather crabbed. "She'd be stupid if I could."

She sat there, her cheeks on her palms, looking down so drearily that I said:

"Heaven help me if I've made you anywise unhappy."

"There was a lady once," she mused to herself, in the fashion of one accustomed to soliloquies, "young, fair, not over good, the Pride of — say Bagdad. She was always loved for the qualities she had and she throve in self-conceit, till one day a man innocently loved her for the single merit that she didn't possess. 'Twas her first hint that she had a deficiency, and it made her unhappy, coming, as it did, at an irritating moment."

"'Twas a proper punishment then for her wanting all the lovers. Is that the moral in the tail of it?"

"It is an idle parable and I'd not have told it but that I've guessed you're no Daniel at interpretations. I'm alone in a strange country. You look strong, generous, and valiant—a man built by nature to be a bulwark for the helpless and take the buffetings that would kill the ones they're aimed at. I chose you under a misapprehension for my lover and defender but it is just such a one that I would choose, had I the power, out of all the world. You say you love



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

me—after your own way. Are you willing then to hold to our betrothal in solemn earnest and lend me an assistance which may or may not be needed?”

“That I am. My soul, if you want me, 'tis beyond me why the stuff of my cloak need stand in the way; and if it does, I'll order a camlet one by the next Orleans boat. So only your quarrels are innocent ones and have naught to do—but of course *you* have naught to do with the conspiracy. 'Twas only that plagued Antony gave me the thought.”

She pledged me to it, promising herself as innocent as I believed. As I walked with her to the edge of the woods where a saddled pony awaited her, she told me that I should know more of her and how she came there at some future time. She seemed a little troubled by the solemnity with which I told her my name and bade her call upon me in case Colonel Russel, or any one else, should annoy her.

“You are not sad now,” she said at parting. “You remember you were sad when you first saw me. You had a prior sweetheart, I rather judged, and I had upset your estimate of her.”

At this, I was for a second overcast again. But hope is high in a happy man. Thankful was young and in moderation winsome. She surely would—fate must have willed it that she would—find some other husband and leave me free.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

But my new mistress had begun another of her seemingly pointless stories.

"There was a country fiddler once, who made fine music for the country folks and was happy doing it. One day he went to London and heard a famous violinist, a finer player than he had supposed existed. It taught him something. He was wiser than before but—he never played again. It was sad, for his happiness was bound up in his music. Was it the violinist's fault?"

"No, surely not."

"I'm glad you see it so. I was afraid in the outcome, you'd go to blaming the violinist. Good-bye."

She was off with a canter down the road that led to Belpre. Then I remembered that she had not yet told me who she was or where she was staying, her only command being that I should hold myself in readiness and await further word from her. I was a plodder always and when it comes to patience, I defy any man to out-wait me. As I turned homeward contentedly, my one pressing thought was that I must somehow, anyhow, break the fetters that bound me to Thankful.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

### CHAPTER V

**B**Y THE blockhouse I overtook Jared, who was just returning to the office after his supper at the tavern. Walking on by his side, I sounded him as to his sentiments for Thankful.

"She is brown and plain," I began apologetically.

"Opinions, Ezra, are shifting sands, without a standard to ground them on. You recall Ancy Ann's dictum that the moon looks as big as a cart-wheel—which leaves a fascinating doubt as to how big a cart-wheel may look. When you label Thankful plain, you should point out for the enlightenment of mankind your idea of a cracking beauty. Take courage. I'll try in friendship's interests to cut you out on your wedding day. Your flounderings meanwhile do so add to the merriness of life, that it would be a pity to end them."

"You'll not cut me out at all at the gait you're going," I returned querulously; for Jared was a constant irritation to Thankful, the only subject of his conversations, so near as I could make out from her, being the beauty of the maidens up at Chillicothe.

"My gait's the sort for a long track. Fasten a maid's attention and, soon or late, you

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

have won her. Let her think ill, if she won't think well; but think of you she must. Suppliant lovers are a tame story to Thankful, but it's a busy day when I'm out of her mind, and I am bound she lies awake half the night hating me."

We had reached the house by now and Jared dodged through the door catching Thankful with a deft movement and pressing his lips against hers before she could resist him.

"And he kissed Mistress Polly  
When the clock reel ticked,"

he sang out of the old song, while he laughed shamelessly at the girl's anger.

Meanwhile, at home in the midst of practicalities, with Ancy Ann demanding her sassafras which I had clean forgotten, my secret regarding the forest-sprite began to grow oppressive. A dozen times, Ancy Ann nigh wrested it from me by her close queries as to why I was so late when I knew supper would be waiting. That I escaped detection was only because I always did exhibit a most sheepish embarrassment under her ratings, especially in Jared's presence. Thankful, it happened, was also in disgrace, having stolen away from her work for an afternoon jaunt, and my sister's attention oscillated between us till Jared interposed:

"My soul, Mistress Ancy, I'd scarce blame you if you'd wed again and leave the children



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

to their own device," a remark which for the moment silenced Ancy Ann. Her dislike for Jared she was accustomed to vent on me, feeling the hopelessness by any mortal means of disturbing his equanimity.

I swiftly changed the subject by inquiring if any progress had been made that day toward ferreting out the conspiracy.

"None, but that can't last. We keep up too active and efficient a watch on the Island."

"I begin to fear there is no treason at all and no empire in the distance," said Thankful. "I've been counting on being presented at court some day and jilting Ezra for a duke. Do dukes wear camlet cloaks, I wonder?"

"Keep your thoughts to homespun on a week day," ordered Ancy Ann. "The only camlet garment in these parts is Blennerhassett's."

"That is where you are mistaken, mommy dear. There are now two camlet cloaks hereabouts; Blennerhassett's blue one and—a green one. I met the wearer of it as I was passing through the edge of the woods near Lacy's cabin. 'Twas green as the trees in June."

"Belike he was a conspirator."

"As for that, never a word will I say, lest Jared set his Vigilants on him, except that he was monstrous fascinating and mysterious."

"A camlet cloak!"—the words burned into me. This camlet cloak and its mysterious and

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

fascinating wearer, what connection had they with my new-budded romance?

A caller in the *Sentinel* office here took Jared away from us. The office was hard by the house and we listened to their colloquy through the open doors. The caller was a Frank Miller, somewhat of a stranger in town, who had allied himself neither with Burr nor with us. He was a man of soldierly appearance. Jared insisted from the first that he had seen service somewhere and, moreover, that he was trying to conceal the fact for he walked with a studied slouch and stood straightest in his moments of abstraction. Also, Jared argued him an officer of the regulars with more or less high degree because he lacked the joviality of the common soldier and showed no disposition toward indiscriminate comradeship. He was cold and unmagnetic, it is true, but I had never shared in Jared's dislike. Shortly before, he had challenged a foreigner who had made some speech derogatory to the United States, and the two went so far as to exchange shots. I thought this vindicated him of any connection with the conspiracy; but not so, Jared.

"He precipitated the fight and made it ostentatious, as if his loyalty were on trial," was his verdict.

As they met now in the office, Jared's suspicions showed in his greeting.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Good evening, Mr. Miller. And how are they all at the warehouse, Mr. Miller?"

"You speak my name as if you had a quarrel with it," the man said slowly, and as though he might be measuring himself up against Jared.

"Truth to tell, I have. It is common, yet not too common either. Now Dalrymple, that's bona fide on the face of it, while Jones and Smith smack overmuch of an alias. But Miller—just the thing for a fellow, a rather crafty fellow, who wants to escape notice. I always doubt a Miller or a Lewis, until I see his birth certificate."

"Like it or not, 'twill do to enroll. I wish to join your Vigilants. You will take me in spite of your distrust?"

"Nay, on account of it. If you are inside our band, we can watch you. Outside, I rather fancied you were watching us."

Miller's light laugh was distinctly well-bred. I liked him for his lack of irritation. "Why so I was," he explained, "watching you and watching Burr to see which would come out ahead. Keep astride the fence till you are sure which meadow holds the bull. I will not pretend loyalty mainly because you would not believe me. Burr is now on the wane and I desert. Why not? He is for himself, one eye on an empire. Tiffin is for himself, one eye on the senatorship, and Frank Miller is for himself,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

both eyes on to-morrow's dinner. When you have fought against as many odds as I have, you will let such abstractions as loyalty go flicker, and come out squarely for yourself and a full stomach. You begin to trust me?" The low measured tones and essential reserve of manner lent a dignity to these rather trifling words.

Jared looked at the speaker narrowly, "I never trust any man till he is dead. But if you are lying, I'll pay you the compliment of saying that I couldn't do it better myself."

"It was heads for the state, tails for the traitors. The penny has fallen, heads up. If I can serve heads, therefore, my reward may be something, which is better than tails and a certainty of nothing. I offer then to the state my rather indifferent fighting prowess supplemented by a brightly scoured set of wits. If you want counsel, I can plan equal to any man."

"Soul of my body, though I am no bad hand at plans myself, I should like to hear yours from time to time, so that—"

"So that?"

"So that I may know what not to do."

"You do me an injustice," answered Miller with a baffling gravity difficult to interpret, "I had already counted upon that and meant advising contrary to what I deemed advisable."

"Death of me—I hope you are with the conspirators. I love to fight with such a man.



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

A poor partner is not so much of a handicap, but a poor opponent takes the zest out of any game. Know then, you are on patrol duty to-night, your post the East Point of the Island. Mine is the middle of the North Shore. At eight, yes. So—well.”

Ancy Ann had finished her meal by now, and she flung herself out of the room with a mutter about that “runagate Jared,” adding that, were she a man, edit her own paper she would, yea, and keep it Federalist, or else go West and stick to soldiering.

“Jared is no runagate, despite his impertinences,” Thankful observed. “He is handsome, with a neck like a gentleman, white and untanned. And you know, Ezra, if you hadn’t him to edit, it really would be best to go back to soldiering.”

“Marry him then, sissy dear, instead of me, if that is your opinion. He is a splendid man and you’d surely prefer him if you’d only make up your mind to it.”

“Marry *him* ! If every girl up state were dead, and he were forced to choose from Marietta, I’d not marry Jared Dalrymple.”

“Thanks for a rejection which saves the wear of a proposal,” for Jared himself had come up smiling behind us. “I’ll swear my rival in the camlet cloak wasn’t much like me.”

“Well, he might have been near the size. He was dark though—what I saw of him—and handsome.”

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"What you saw of him?"

"His collar was up and his hat was down, but one needn't really see to know that he was handsome."

"He is our man, Ezra; for a golden eagle—he is our man. Cloak collar up in Indian summer—proof incontrovertible that, of a conspirator."

"And is the collar of your hunting blouse never up in Indian summer, crafty sir?"

"Oh, the sun, the wind! Think of that pretty neck of mine. Besides he was in the woods."

"Oh, the sun and wind! But say he *is* a conspirator. Perhaps he is my duke. He turned me the sweetest compliments, a full half dozen running fire, while he asked me the way to Sassafra's Hill. If Ezra had stayed a little longer, he would have seen him. His cloak had a golden cast to its greenness and its buckle—oh, if I only had it for my girdle!—was a glittering green dragon. The feel of camlet cloth is so different from linsey. When he didn't see, I reached out and touched it."

"Thankful, Thankful! were you that close to him in the woods where room is so plenty? Such immodesty—to touch a man," and Ancy Ann, who had returned, hurried her away to lecture her upon manners befitting maidens.

Thankful's words were full of meaning to me. If a man in a camlet cloak were of a truth

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

bound for Sassafras Hill that afternoon, obviously he must have had an appointment with my lady of the forest. And he had missed her! Losing his way, he had only arrived after she was gone. I felt an instant's jubilation over this, quite as if I had wrested his tryst from him by valor, instead of slipping into it unawares; and then —

Jared certainly thought the man a conspirator. If he were, why should she be meeting him? I recalled her fear of Colonel Russel, a United States officer. I recalled her approval of that fellow, Antony. Did she mean to make me love her in his fashion in spite of myself? Was she somehow implicated in this wicked plot? Clearly, it became my duty as a patriot to share the matter with Jared, telling him accurately of every word and act, and leaving it to his keener intellect to husk the meaning out of them.

"Sassafras Hill," Jared here observed. "Do you notice anything peculiar about this camlet clad stranger of Thankful's inquiring the way to Sassafras Hill?"

Thus put to the point, I flushed and writhed in moral conflict, till sentiment got the better of patriotism and stood guard at my lips lest any word of the woods-nymph escape them. She was innocent. She must be innocent. I would have her no other way but innocent. And, besides, how could I make known my fool-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

ish speeches to Jared and, in the issue, to all Marietta, Ancy Ann and Thankful included?

It is a villainous thing, as I had always heard, to lead a double life, but I never knew before that it was so desperately unpleasant. Ancy Ann's espionage may have led me to take my slips too seriously. At all events, I felt myself sadly convicted of my sins, unfaithful to my sweetheart, secreting evidence useful to my country, betrothed to two maidens, and on the highroad to bigamy.

But Jared answered his own question without noticing my agitation.

"Sassafras Hill is the one point from which the entire shore of the river from here to Belpre is visible. No one goes there—no one would go there but a trapper in woodsman's clothes like Ezra, or a gentleman traitor, bent either on reconnoitring or signaling to a confederate." There was a long pause, then he added:

"The man in the camlet cloak. Come what will, we must catch this rogue in the camlet cloak."

That night, Jared and I started forth for patrol duty. A close guard was kept around the Island, as I said, the hope being that we would espy some secret agent smuggling messages through our lines.

Marietta was founded by learned gentlemen from New England, of whom my father was one, and they festooned the town with classical



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

names as a sort of cheap luxury in a hard pioneering life. We ourselves lived on the Appian Way. Down the Appian Way Jared and I passed and across to the Via Sacra on which stood the church. From the church, we strode past the Campus Martius in the center of which was the blockhouse, and on down the river road that connected Marietta with Belpre.

All this while, there was silence between us. Jared, no doubt, was ruminating the conspiracy; I was living over again my meeting with the maid of Sassafra Hill. To this day, that fancy of mine for her has been a source of constant marveling to me. Never have I solved the problem why a just man who realizes the moral worthlessness of beauty and the unfairness of setting a pretty maid above an ugly one, should suddenly go chasing after a pair of glistening eyes. My wild thirst really to look on her again was like the morbid cumulative desire for drink or drugs. I find it is only what is good for a man that he manages to care for in moderation. For the unwholesome things, useless, poisonous even, the craving goes past any pang of normal hunger.

My lack of knowledge concerning her I supplemented by a wealth of imagination. I built her up a character out of my own wishes, swathing her in goodness and purity till it seemed the greatest of all my follies that I could think her a possible conspirator. In a

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

sudden jealousy of the man in the cloak, I sought to spy out knaveries of which he might be guilty. As we stopped at the point where our canoes were hidden, my thoughts reverted to our new recruit and I pulled Jared's sleeve.

"I have an idea. This fellow in camlet appears and Frank Miller enlists the same day."

"Exactly—you don't mean to say you have just noticed the coincidence?"

Now I had just noticed it, but I didn't, in view of Jared's tone, mean to say so. What I did say was:

"There is probably some collusion between the two."

"Good. In time you will develop a fine insight. All things considered though, you might strike out the 'probably.'"

"And this man in camlet is an emissary from Burr to Blennerhassett," I pursued confidently.

"We will put in there the 'probably' we just struck out. An emissary, perhaps, but an emissary should aim to escape attention. Why then wear a garment so noticeably inappropriate, unless the camlet cloak is a sign agreed upon, without which he is not to be received by Blennerhassett." Then, after some thought—

"Burr and Blennerhassett would be likely to know each other's envoys—at least no such striking identification would be needed. Still

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

besides them there is the unknown element, Wilkinson for instance."

"Whosoever agent he is," I went on, elucidating my idea, "the camlet man wants to reach the Island and Frank Miller means to pass him through unchallenged."

"I think so. Miller would hardly risk carrying messages himself since our suspicions might lead us to search him; and to deliver a verbal one he would have to land on the Island. He knows we are watching him and that if we found him absent from his post his skin would pay for it. Men handle a traitor to their country less harshly than a traitor to themselves. You are right—he means to pass in his confederate."

"Frank Miller guards the East Point and you the North Shore. My idea is, that at the last moment you two exchange places. Then when the Camlet tries the East Point expecting to find Miller there, you can surprise and capture him."

"Dear Ezra—and is that your wonderful idea! I imagine that Miller himself has figured it out exactly as you are figuring it, and that he has already said to his confederate of the cloak practically this, 'Jared suspects. He will at the last moment change places with me and take the East Point himself. I will then be on the North Shore. Do you come there and I will pass you in.' Now I am going to disap-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

point them. I shall not change places with him. The envoy will try the North Shore and—I will be there to capture him.”

Alone at my post that night, I fell to pondering more rationally those two, the lady and the man in the cloak, twisting them into all possible combinations and interweaving with them a supposititious colonel. Could she love the camlet-clad stranger? Hardly when she had never clapped eye on him. Was she then really concerned in this heinous plot? On that point I resolved to suspend judgment till we had learned more of the unknown man in camlet; for by midnight my virulence against him had abated as I realized how surely her innocence depended upon his.

Close upon morning, I heard Jared's whistle calling for assistance. I was the next guard to the west as Miller was to the east. Quick as I rowed up to him, Miller was before me. Jared's clothes bore signs of a scuffle, and his canoe was half full of water. Far off, toward the Ohio shore, a boat was darting about, its occupant indistinct in the distance.

“Certes, it was our man in camlet,” Jared said. “I should have caught him if friend Miller here had not mistaken us in the darkness and held me instead of him. No use pulling so long a face, Ezra. The milk is spilled and that is the end of it—for to-night. So back to your places.”



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

I had suspected this and was in a sense prepared for it, but I doubt if any amount of suspicions can make their confirmation less brutal. The man in the camlet cloak was a traitor then and she was his ally as well as Miller. Her fear of the Colonel Russel she had mentioned was due only to the fact that he was a loyal officer. Her kindness to me was merely a trap so that I would defend her in her plottings. I said the words over to myself slowly and stoically. They dropped one by one down into the depths of me with the dull directness of leaden weights sinking into mid-ocean. Unable to think further, I gazed stupidly at the eddies they made and was conscious only that I had lost something inestimably precious.

When we were relieved, Jared took the center of the stream back to Marietta while I, with Miller in my wake, crossed more directly to Belpre. On the Ohio shore, a ways above the village, there was a flatboat anchored of rather finer make than common. In passing, I rowed close alongside it, inspecting it with a riverman's curiosity. My astonishment was greater than I can tell when a bow of ribbon fell from above, glancing off my nose into my canoe, while over me echoed the merry laugh I had heard that afternoon. Looking up, I saw her at the window of a cabin, shining pale yet brilliant in the gray morning light. Face to face with her, knowing her purposes, I was

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

fired with sudden resentment. She had wronged Thankful; she was playing me for a fool. In my revulsion, I was about to fling back the token she had thrown me and with it to cast her out of my life forever. It was Miller who prevented. He must have seen the pantomime for he pushed forward, not as it seems now, in jealousy, but cool and passionless, as if he were only testing how firm a hold she had over me.

"'Tis a little matter, yon bow, Mr. Wilbur, trifling like the lady who gave it and not worth a quarrel; but, such as it is, I maintain that it was meant for me. Will you give it to me?"

That moment decided me. In the teeth of another's claim, she was mine. Good or bad, how did the woman herself concern me? She would go away as she had come. It was only a matter of her face, the ring of her laugh, the memory of her wonderful eyes. I chose to keep them for my solace in the long dreary years after she should have vanished, to keep them in defiance of Thankful's claims and Miller's opposition and my own good judgment.

"It is a trifling thing," I returned, my hand trembling under the touch of the soft silken knot, "like the one who gave it—and surely not worth a quarrel—but it happens that I set a stress on trifles." I thrust it into my belt, just underneath my hunting knife, adding:

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"I will give it a valiant guard. Do you want it? Take it then, if you can and dare."

"You are crazy," he said coldly, and leaning to his oars he darted out into the stream.

Indeed my triumphant laughter may have sounded like a madman's. She was mine—I repeated it. I had taken her in, proven my right to her. She should live in my dreams forever and float in my smoke wreaths when I had stolen away from Thankful of an evening with my pipe. I swore loudly to myself to think that for a single moment I had meant in my righteousness to exclude her.

## CHAPTER VI

WHEN I reached the printing office, I found Jared disturbed over the conspiracy and the new depths it was revealing in Miller's treachery and connivance with the man in the camlet cloak.

"It is as I suspected," he said. "The two are in collusion and I came near downing both of them. I recognized the fellow in the cloak and wrested this package from him, though Miller doesn't know it. He was Philip Nolan—Ezra, as I live, the same Phil Nolan in the flesh again."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

I did not understand just then the reason of his emphasis or why he said "again," not having kept track of Nolan those later years nor indeed ever having known him intimately. He was, I knew, of an unsavory reputation in the old times, being soul to soul with the Spanish, and prime mover in all the rascalities in which General Wilkinson himself was more or less concerned. Such, then, was the man she had meant to meet! With a desire to know the worst of it, I gazed anxiously at the sealed packet which Jared had laid on the table before us.

"I would take it to Governor Tiffin unopened, but there is no time to waste. Its contents may direct our actions and I have his authority for this."

So saying, Jared carefully cut the wrappings and broke the seal. Only a blank paper was within and I, who was expecting something readable, raged when I saw it.

"Sensitive ink," Jared announced. "The message must be important."

"What will you do?"

"There are various methods. We will heat it, wet it, and try chemicals. Something will bring the writing out."

As it chanced, the first expedient was successful. Jared held the paper near the candle and letters presently showed forth. But such a medley of letters!

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Cipher," Jared declared, copying it down. I reproduce it here. It was:

hglivhvwwxlimdrgslfglkvmrmtziizmtvuliyyzivigtrevvm  
xolhvwkzkviglvmtorhsvnrhzhbybortsglugsvdsrgvwrznlmw

For awhile we stared at it, I hopelessly enough. After much deliberation as to our best course, Jared said:

"We must call a mass meeting and tell everything. Yes, print it in the *Sentinel*. Publicity is the thing for honest men."

Forthwith we set to work and got out a *Sentinel*, not the regular *Weekly Sentinel*, which was not due for three days yet, but an extra over and above the *Weekly* devoted entirely to the conspiracy, Nolan, and the message. In these later days, it is not so altogether uncommon to get out an extra — even a whole paper, full size, and very like, about a much smaller matter than a conspiracy. However, it was a thing unknown up to that time in Marietta and our three column sheet did us proud. Nor, as I remember, did we take half the space of the next regular issue, as the way is now, praising ourselves for our own enterprise. By night, near every one in Marietta had seen the message and knew of the whole affair. Nothing, however, was revealed of Frank Miller's duplicity, Jared keeping that back.

"If I speak, the conspirators will supplant him with another," he said, "and if there must be a spy on us, I prefer to know who he is."



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Curiosity was rife as to what the cypher meant, and indignation ran high against the man in camlet. Thankful, however, was delighted because he had escaped. Philip Nolan was only a name to her, and a right pretty one she vowed it was. If he was, as Jared said, a notorious conspirator of the past decade, why that but made him the more competent to carry out his aims now and bettered his chance of a dukedom. In these after years, when this man, Nolan, has come to be known the whole world round as "The Man Without a Country," I often recall her silly prattle. Ah well, his country like Burr's was that imaginary empire, and when it slid away, it left him an eternal expatriate.\*

---

\*NOTE TO PUBLISHER.

There was a real Philip Nolan, who was closely connected with General Wilkinson and acted as agent in the General's treacherous negotiations with the Spanish. This Nolan was executed in Texas in 1801. In the book, "The Man Without a Country," Dr. Hale accidentally chose the same name for his hero, a fact which gave rise to considerable comment, especially in the South where the real Philip Nolan, his doings and his death, were not yet forgotten.

It seems justifiable in this story of mine to harmonize fiction with fact by using the real Philip Nolan, letting his execution be a pretense contrived for certain reasons, and shadowing a possible connection between him and "The Man Without a Country." As you will see, his supposed death works in well with the plot of "The Princess and the Pioneer."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

I was, and still am, unable to place the foundation of Thankful's enthusiasm, whether she merely wanted a rival to play against Jared and me, or whether the romance and mystery of the stranger really appealed to her. At any rate, I beamed benignantly, pleased that she had something attractive to weave into her dreams and feeling less guilty over my own duplicity and the bow under my hunting knife.

But Ancy Ann shortly took me to task for my complacency.

"A poor-spirited stick of a brother! Nor would I blame Thankful if she chose another. Can you find naught to say when she flaunts this rogue before you—naught to do but simpler as foolishly as a babe with a rattle?"

This was so much of a surprise that I fear I enraged Ancy Ann still more by inquiring simply:

"What would you want me to do?"

"Do? Go ask Jared. She thinks more of him to-day than of you; as well she might—a lumberer who comes asking his sister how to behave to his sweetheart."

I seized upon this revelation. "If she does—why—why—it is meet—you know, Ancy, the minister says it is meet to marry according to one's love, and she'd better—at least, *hadn't* she better—marry Jared then?"

"There isn't a woman in Marietta with half an eye but would take you instead of him,"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Ancy Ann burst out, after an indignant silence in which she had been measuring my bulk and evidently wishing me as small as I once was. "Love! You'll be telling me next that you don't love Thankful."

Though I dared not tell her, I must have looked it, for she added:

"'Tis passing late to consider that question. You are promised. You asked her to marry you—"

"I didn't. 'Twas she who did the asking." This was a minor point but in the interests of accuracy I felt justified in raising it, though Ancy Ann immediately frowned it down.

"All Marietta knows you are promised. Neither you nor Thankful, if I can help it, shall be called a jilt. Ezra, if you don't mend your manners, I shall begin to suspect that you've been fool enough to fancy yourself in love with some one else."

At this, the bow burned and tingled underneath my knife like a live thing. I went so red that she would have known, were it not my habit to blush at the mere mention of a feminine name. When I went to the office, I felt it my first business to divert my sister from this dangerous trail. The matter, I am ashamed to say, took precedence of the conspiracy. Her advice to ask Jared how to treat a sweetheart returned to me and though she meant it mockingly, I saw no better way than to follow it in all seriousness.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

At my setting forth of Ancy Ann's complaint, he laughed uproariously. "She is right, Ezra. As a lover, you are a sorry spectacle. Did you ever praise Thankful's looks, and call her Queen of Women and Goddess of the Wilderness?"

"What is the use, when she isn't?"

"Did you ever tell her that you loved her?"

"She might know that by the fact that I'm going to marry her just to save her a disappointment, when 'tis the last thing on earth I want to do."

"I suppose you've never—er—kissed her?"

"Not since our betrothal. It's meaningless anyway—dusting lips together."

"Faith, so is a posy meaningless abstractly, yet there's often sweetness lurking in it. Try it, Ezra, try it; and in your talk, take leave for once of sanities. There'll be no man by to mark its silliness and a maid will swallow more honey than a bear. Prose curdles love; take poetry. Sit with your arm about her on a rainbow off in space and dangle your feet disdainfully above the world and verities. Express your love; multiply it out; fill the universe with it. Measure it off with some sublime yardstick, such as the distance from here to Sirius. Wrap her in it round and round, till the wrappings start at Marietta and reach out to the Milky Way. That is as far as I'd advise *you* to carry it. You're such a limited, unim-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

aginative fellow, and the Milky Way is the very outer rim of things, beyond which one looks off into a chasm of nothingness. Yes, you'd best stop there—it's unsafe venturing for the maggot outside the edge of his cheese. Lord, were I only in your place, or even this camlet rogue's! Give me some romantic settings and the freedom of the dictionary and 'tis a lover I'd make would melt Saint Cecelia into a handmaiden of Aphrodite and split the rocks with sighs. Ah, Ezra, you look so gloomy over my advice that I fear I shall have to take matters into my own own hands and court Thankful myself."

"I wish to heaven you would, if that is the way it has to be done." But I resolved none the less to make a dash at it when Ancy Ann was about.

When the work on the extra *Sentinel* was done, Jared and I stood by the table gazing at the untranslated and seemingly untranslatable message before us.

"And what now?" I asked hopelessly.

"First, I shall figure out this cryptogram; then we will go with it to Chillicothe."

I gazed at him in wonderment. Figure out that tangle of v's and h's! But he bent himself over it, shot his fingers through his curly hair and prepared to say nothing more to me.

Late that night, Jared roused the house and belike the neighborhood as well with a mighty



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

whoop. I tumbled out of bed and down to the printing office, thinking the man in the camlet cloak had tracked him there to get back his message. But Jared was alone, singing a wild song, and waving the cryptogram.

"I have found it, Ezra! I have actually found it—the key to the cipher! Look, listen! —'Store seed corn without opening. Arrange for bearer to give enclosed paper to English emissary by light of the white diamond.' 'Store seed corn without opening—'"

"But how did you do it?"

"Easy. Look at it. First, the presumption was it would be English. Now the letters this contains are mainly consonants, and unusual consonants at that; the last letters of the alphabet being most numerous and the first ones almost entirely lacking. In any English sentence it would be exactly the reverse. It is therefore impossible to rearrange these letters into any words; and so I argued each letter must represent some other letter. 'V' in the cipher occurs most frequently, fifteen times to 'l' ten and 'r' eight, which are next most numerous. If the message be English then, 'v' would represent 'e,' by all odds our letter of most frequent occurrence, 'l' and 'r' being also vowels, probably 'o' and 'i.' Of the remaining letters those repeated oftenest in the cipher are 'z,' 'h,' and 'g,' one of which would be another vowel, either 'a' or 'i,' while the

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

others being consonants are certainly 's' and 't.' Now notice. 'E' is the fifth letter from the beginning of the alphabet, and 'v' the fifth from the end. Take, then, for the key an inverted alphabet, call 'z,' 'a'—'y,' 'b'—'x,' 'c,' etc., and it is plain as day. Punctuation and capitals are omitted to make it look more mysterious. 'Store seed corn without opening. Arrange for bearer to give enclosed paper to English emissary by light of the white diamond.' An English emissary, do you see? We were right in suspecting England's collusion. We must keep a narrow lookout for this English emissary. A thousand dollars, Ezra, that this message is not from Burr but from Wilkinson. When Wilkinson was plotting with Spain in the '90's on his own account for the dismemberment of the United States, Nolan was always his confidential agent.\* But the 'enclosed paper'—where is the 'enclosed paper'? None in this

---

\*In the court-martial of General Wilkinson in 1811, the second charge reads :

"That he, the said James Wilkinson, while in military service and holding the commission of brigadier-general in the army of the United States, did combine and confederate himself with the officers and agents of a foreign power; that is to say, with the Spanish officers and agents concerned in the administration of the late provincial government of Louisiana, for the purpose of devising and carrying into effect certain pernicious projects for the dismemberment of the United States, and for an unlawful and treasonable confederacy between certain dismembered portions of the United States and said foreign power; and for that purpose and intent, did hold divers secret consultations, and carry on secret and

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

package, I swear. Now what is this seed corn that must not be opened, and what can the white diamond mean? Faith, 'tis still a cipher."

For me, my heart was sadly weighted by this reading of the message. An English emissary—to whom could that refer but herself, her own lovely, treacherous self. I resolved on our next meeting to tax her with it pointedly, that she might know, however fair I thought her, I was no longer her dupe.

Frank Miller came into the office next morning, his dignity augmented by his obvious disapproval. He coolly ignored me and pointed to a copy of the *Sentinel* extra.

"If you would only listen to my plans, Mr. Dalrymple! But no; you take matters into your own hands, throw me off patrol duty, and share what you have learned with all Marietta."

"What I have learned, is mine to share, nor have you a right to comment."

---

treasonable correspondence with certain officers, agents, and emissaries of that power."

There are five specifications covering a lapse of time from 1789 to 1804. Specification 3 reads:

"He, the said James Wilkinson, in pursuance of his said unlawful plot and confederacy, and in continuation of his said unlawful and treasonable correspondence, did cause and procure his confidential agent, Philip Nolan, to write certain instructions to the said emissary (Spanish), Thomas Power, etc."

Conferences between the General and Spanish agents are alleged to have been held at Cincinnati, Frankfort, Detroit, and other places.

— C. B.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Ah, possibly I have."

Impressively he drew forth an official-looking paper and laid it before Jared. It was a warrant from Governor Wilkinson, as head of the army and acting in the interests of the United States, empowering a trusted officer, Colonel Russel, otherwise and for this occasion called Frank Miller, to employ at his discretion any and all means to discover and frustrate an alleged conspiracy being carried on by one Aaron Burr and one Harman Blennerhassett together with other parties unknown.

My eyes grew big. Was this the Colonel Russel whom she had mentioned? Instantly I realized that she had only thrown the ribbon meaning him to see it. It was not merely the impulse of coquetry but part of some unfathomable plan. Yet I could not for my life on cold reflection believe her wholly heartless. I so longed to spy some spark of kindness, a tag end of real worth about her, that I fell to telling myself they were surely there invisible, and could I but make love after Jared's fashion and melt off her outer crust, I'd find her somewhat as I had dreamed.

"You, Mr. Dalrymple," our visitor said with quiet triumph, "have a similar warrant from Governor Tiffin, I opine. Overmany cooks have already nigh spoiled the broth, and henceforward we must either take counsel in this matter or one of us yield precedence to the

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

other. It is a nice question whether this conspiracy is properly a matter for civil or military authorities, whether it is under state or national jurisdiction—in short, it is hard to tell which of us two is appointed from the higher source. You, holding to the Virginia Junto and states' rights, will probably say it is you; I, being a Federalist, maintain it is myself. But why clash? We are working for the same end, let us work harmoniously.”

Jared remained silent several minutes, and Miller urged:

“What do you think of it?”

“I think that General Wilkinson lives up to his capabilities of being of both sides. He has a secret agent, Nolan, and an accredited one, yourself. So, if the treason prospers, he has a share in it through Nolan. If it fails, he can prove to the government by this warrant of yours that he was honestly attempting to defeat it.”

“There is just where your zeal misleads you. If you had asked me, you would have known that there is no longer a Nolan. Philip Nolan was executed, shot by order of the Spanish governor in Waco, Texas, in 1801.”

I started mightily at this, even more than I had at the announcement of Miller's real name, but Jared took it coolly enough, answering:

“You mistake, I did know; and the most sinister part of this affair was the reappearance



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

of friend Philip in these mundane parts. The gaps left by dead men are soon filled; it is therefore good manners for them, when they are executed, to stay executed."

"Do you mean you doubt his death? Why I can produce proof positive—"

"I mean that it was Philip Nolan I encountered breaking patrol to the Island. Besides, I not only recognized him, but he recognized me. There is nothing more convincing than the flash of a mutual recognition I could have shown him to you if you hadn't considerably allowed him to escape."

"True—I wasn't quite frank with you. I did hold you on purpose instead of him, because—that moment one of my plans occurred to me. Thinks I, if we can capture this man, one of us can take his credentials, go to the Island in his place, and learn something worth knowing; for what good is this cipher message, now you have gotten it? You cannot read it—*can* you read it?" Miller leaned forward with keen anxious scrutiny, but Jared laughed him off.

"You will never learn from me."

Nor did he. But he learned it from me for my thoughts make post haste always for my face. Miller pointed to me with a smile.

"Choose a more crafty confidant another time, Mr. Dalrymple. And I'll wager you mean to take your information straight to Chillicothe."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"If you wanted the man captured, why didn't you help capture him?"

It was easy to see that Jared still thought Miller deceiving him. I was not so sure. His warrant was impressive, besides, he was a colonel, and an old soldier like myself, finds it hard to meet a colonel and hold back a salute.

"Because you had already whistled, the Vigiliants were rushing to our assistance, and for such a plan secrecy would be necessary. It is likely he will try to break patrol again. Next time don't whistle, and, be he Nolan or another, we will put my plan into effect."

"You think I will let you wear his cloak and go to the Island in it?"

"If I insisted you might have to let me; but no matter. I trust you. Wear it yourself then, and go find out what you can. That is a fair proposition."

"You don't want to go yourself," Jared said. "The conspirators probably don't know or trust you. Wilkinson is trying to keep his official hands clean in case it all falls through, and you are his official hands. Yet he must communicate with Blennerhassett. Nolan can't reach the Island, and so you propose to send me, as your only hope, and think you will take the chance of getting out of me, and keeping away from Governor Tiffin the information I may procure. It is a fine plan, but—come again another day, and we will talk it over."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"There is a trap about this somewhere, Ezra, but devil a bit do I fall into it," he said when Miller had left. "We will tell no one here just yet, what this translated message reads, but we will take it to Chillicothe as we planned—only sooner, this very day, and consult with Governor Tiffin."

### CHAPTER VII

JARED gave over the command of the Vigilants to his lieutenant, directing him to keep uninterrupted watch on the Island and warning him against giving any post to Miller. Then we set off. It was a wearisome journey in those days, going on horseback through the wilderness up state to Chillicothe.

On reaching our destination and after refreshing ourselves at a tavern, we proceeded to Governor Tiffin's homestead.

When we entered His Excellency's presence, whom should we find there in advance of us, but Colonel Russel or Frank Miller, whichever of the two you prefer to style him.

Jared advanced without discomposure and deliberately chose the alias. "Surely—Mr. Miller. I had scarcely counted upon this pleasure."

"Indeed? I had given you credit for more astuteness. I had counted upon the pleasure

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

of meeting you here. Truth to tell, that was why I came." Then he turned to the Governor. "Mr. Dalrymple's affair, judging from his haste, is urgent. I forego my right of priority. The last shall be first."

When the Governor had greeted us, he looked from one to the other perplexed. "It is a painful question I have to decide. There seems to be much clashing of purposes between you two and you are each entitled to my greatest confidence. Colonel Russel is an officer of standing. His papers show him to be the personal representative of General Wilkinson; his credibility is as great as the General's own. And you, Jared, I have known long—in a new country six years is long—and very loth should I be to believe any ill of you."

"And what ill has the gentleman bade Your Excellency believe?"

"Nay, none. He simply states and questions. Put him out of your thoughts a moment and tell me why you come and what you bring." For Jared was holding the packet which he had taken from his pocket.

Then Jared explained clearly and concisely the matter of Philip Nolan and the camlet cloak; he opened and translated the cipher message; and lastly he stated his belief that Philip Nolan had never been killed as pretended, but that he still lived, was a secret agent of Wilkinson's, and that many things jus-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

tified the presumption that he was in collusion with Colonel Russel.

The Governor listened judicially and there was no doubt his mind was free from bias. "The question then, is mainly one of credibility between you and Colonel Russel, or rather, between you and General Wilkinson," he said when Jared had done, adding more to himself than to us:

"True, it is possible enough that General Wilkinson is a traitor, as well he as Burr; and it is also possible that Jared has deceived me and is himself allied with the conspirators."

"I? Your Excellency, who says that?"

"And it is possible—or no, it is hardly possible that you misread each other, that only circumstances are against Jared and only Jared's prejudice against the General."

"Circumstances? What circumstances? In years past, I have seen and known of underhand doings of the General, but true, I have no proof of them. Your Excellency is right. It is a question of credibility between us. You have known me long. What has this man said? In justice, let him say it again."

"He has just delivered this package in behalf of General Wilkinson. It contains cipher messages, the same cipher you have there, which Burr has sent to the General from time to time, asking for assistance and giving something of his plans. The General states that he



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

accepted Burr's confidences merely to reveal them to the authorities. He has promised nothing and though he allowed the traitors to trust him for a while, he has now broken off all communication with them. He prefers from this point to give the case to civil officers. The openness of his present course and the watch he directed Colonel Russel to keep in Marietta, are in themselves sufficient warrant for his loyalty."

"But me—Your Excellency, what about me?"

The Governor was silent, and Miller spoke.

"It is hardly fair to say that I have thrown suspicion upon Mr. Dalrymple. I have a duty, which he, if acting honestly, should not condemn me for following out. This is the whole case. Three months ago, I went to Marietta, sent by General Wilkinson to glean what evidence I could against the conspirators. I mixed with their recruits and took note of the stores and provisions being gathered at the warehouse, but confidence in me they never had. Set me opposite Blennerhassett, tell him that the General has betrayed him and I am the General's agent, and, angry though he may be, he will say that he knows nothing of me."

If this statement made any impression, Jared dissipated it by remarking:

"That I believe. It is part of your plan. You have kept your record clean for just such a moment as this."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"When Mr. Dalrymple received his commission from Your Excellency, I thought, let him go ahead and do his work—it is in line with mine. When his work had no results, and the building of boats went on and activity increased about the warehouse, I concluded to look into it. So I enlisted in his Vigilants, and to draw him out professed myself half in sympathy with Burr. He was either innocent or too shrewd to be drawn out; but—it has since occurred to me—despite this half-professed sympathy for Burr, he accepted me, mark you, he accepted me for his Vigilants, and gave me responsible duties."

The silence was broken by Jared.

"Go on to the night we patrolled together."

"That night, at Jared's whistle, I rushed up. He was scuffling with a man. I thought in a flash, 'It is a messenger for Blennerhassett. If we capture him now, in the presence of the Vigilants who are fast coming up, we can only jail him. Blennerhassett will hear of it and will distrust any one who may feign to represent him. But if Jared and I can capture him another time quietly, one of us can take his credentials, go to the Island, impose on Blennerhassett with them and learn something worth knowing. Considering on those lines, I let him escape.'"

The Governor nodded. It was plausible and no doubt I showed the approval I felt. How-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

ever mistaken he was in Jared, a man talking thus open and direct is a noble sight. Miller continued :

"Next day, I proposed my plan to Mr. Dalrymple. He was very loth to entertain it, even though I let him be the one to visit the Island. 'I am an accredited agent,' I reflected, 'yet he refuses to help me put in custody this man in camlet. Now why should he refuse ?' I turn the matter over on all sides to find what motive he could have in shielding him. Presently a light dawns. Your Excellency, we are certain there is no Philip Nolan living; perhaps there is no camlet cloak either—I saw none—or if there is, possibly it is a disguise for Jared's self. He has the message, he knows the cipher. 'Seed corn—white diamond,' a harmless, unintelligible thing he gives us, and if you notice, he holds back the 'enclosed paper' to which it refers saying there was none. But Mr. Dalrymple, when he fixed on Philip Nolan as a promising scapegoat, was unfortunately ignorant of his execution. Learning of it now, he is forced to stultify himself, declaring the dead alive, the officially, incontestably dead—or admit his story a farce. He should have selected Thomas Power, instead, who is quite as disreputable and not yet in his grave."

I was appalled by these suspicions, but Jared himself burst into a ringing laugh.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Excuse me, Your Excellency, but it is so monstrous funny to hear him figure me out. And my assailant that night—where do you put him?"

"He might have been your confederate, perhaps Mr. Wilbur here, who, knowing me as a United States agent, arranged a realistic conflict with you for my benefit. I've no doubt he would have escaped without my assistance."

At this, my blood began to seethe. Dueling, we understood, was falling into disrepute in the East, especially since the Burr-Hamilton affair, but it was still court of honor with us along the Ohio. I had fought oftener in my time than most, being disposed to challenge every man who accused me of "murdering my great-grandmother"—which set phrase was a chip on the shoulder of rowdies and only meant a dare to fight. I never could look upon it like Jared, who ridiculed the whole institution, sifting the allegations against him equal to Judge Cutler, and only fighting "in legitimate substantiation of a question of fact," as he said, as for instance when any one called him afraid to fight.

Well, I advanced now with a formal challenge, but Jared shoved me back, bidding me for once not to be a fool. For himself, he stared long at Miller, then he said:

"Pardon, I was only thinking how magnificently you could ferret out the conspiracy if

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

you weren't in the conspiracy. You would be worth President Jefferson's while to bribe—but to the main issue. It resolves itself, as we agree, into a question of veracity. Your Excellency, if I can prove that General Wilkinson is still in league with the traitors, that this message comes from him, and that for some reason the 'enclosed paper' was omitted, will that be sufficient to show my innocence?"

"I submit—it will," Miller himself said, with, as I thought, undue alacrity when the whereabouts of the missing paper was in question. "He is your agent, Your Excellency, let him continue so. General Wilkinson leaves everything in your hands. Time will show who is innocent. I only ask leave to watch Mr. Dalrymple so that, even if disposed, he can do no harm to the country. And if I should find, we will not say further evidence, but any evidence of treachery on his part, you will permit me to inform you of it."

The Governor acquiesced, and when the interview was closed, Jared announced to Miller:

"You say you are General Wilkinson's proxy. Well, I take pleasure in informing the General's proxy, that the General is the most thorough-going traitor ever in the service, and if he wish to call me to account, let him choose his weapons, knives, pistols, fists, or—proof."

"The latter, by all means, Mr. Dalrymple. Distance, two months, referee, His Excellency.



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

I bear you no animosity; shake hands before the conflict begins."

As for me, I was not minded to lose my opportunity of crossing swords with a colonel. Being now out of His Excellency's presence, I stepped forward with those figurative hautboys and flourishings which are wont to dismay the timid, and ordered him to repeat, if he dared, the statement he had made regarding me.

He only laughed and said his affair with Mr. Dalrymple had first claim upon him. Whereat, it was apparent by the code that he dared not.

However lightly Jared seemed to take matters, he was sore oppressed that the Governor should doubt him.

"I must clear myself, Ezra," he kept repeating on the way home. "These traitors, masquerading in loyalty—Governor Tiffin must, he *must* see them as we see them. The problem has a solution, if we can only find it. 'Seed corn—white diamond!' What this means is our first task to learn."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

### CHAPTER VIII

BY THE time we had reached Marietta on our homeward trip, Jared had attained a fine fret. We were both physically exhausted with overmuch travel, and our mental condition was far more disquieting than when we set out.

“‘Seed corn’—what the deuce is this seed corn that it needs a cipher message?” Jared kept repeating. “And Phil Nolon, it *was* Phil Nolan, old Phil himself. There was a moon—I saw him. Take my horse on. I stop at the tavern. A glass of liquor is a magic mirror that makes many a cloudy thing clear.”

To the tavern we must go, Jared and I, whenever we thirsted. Ancy Ann was uncommon straight-laced. Though along the Ohio whisky was the panacea for all ills and a general mental, moral, and physical tonic when there were no ills, the customary decanter was none the less banished from our sideboard. She would not even tolerate in our home the four daily drinks, “eye-opener, eleven-o’clocker, four-o’clocker, and night-cap,” indulgence in which was a species of rite with Marietta folks, inviolable as prayers at eve and grace at meals. Indeed, more so, for skepticism was the vogue



"Give it back, I have promised, I have sworn."



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

—even I myself having affected it during my Western campaigning.

Ancy Ann, in the church experience meetings, gives herself the credit of "having dug my soul out of the mire and uplifted it to spiritual planes." I daresay it is due her. Sins have a monstrous taking way with them, and I never thought anything about my soul or even that I had one, till she dug it up, as she said, and showed it to me. Then she replanted it in a hot bed of her own making where it grew a respectable, albeit forced, crop of piety.

When I reached home, I found Ancy Ann absent, taking care of a neighbor who had an ague. Thankful bustled about me, drawing the tea and stirring the porridge and ordering me here and yon, in short playing the housewife much as she had used to play it with her poppy-seed dishes in the corn-crib five years before. There was no misapprehension possible as to my status with her. Like the kitchen and the supper-table, I was and would always be, a mere necessary appurtenance of the game.

The meal being at length cleared away, we went over to the *Sentinel* office. We opened its door—and then we stopped; Thankful, with I know not what emotions; myself, transfixed with amazement and an unexplainable delight. For there in my own proper chair with a file of old *Sentinels* before her, was my sprite of forest and flatboat. Disapprove of her I might, and did,



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

whenever I had time to think, but the simple joy of seeing her drowned all other feelings and left only the wild longing to draw her near, to touch her silken frock, and measure off my heart beats with hers in some grand orchestrated harmony.

Thankful's whisper at my elbow recalled me. "O—oh! Is she real? Did you ever see the like, Ezra? She looks for all the world like a queen, a ver-i-table queen."

The visitor rose and pushed aside the *Sentinals*. Then with a gay twinkle of a smile as if Thankful's words had put a pleasing whimsey into her head, she said:

"Not a queen, but a princess—the Princess Eboli."

"A princess—a live princess," Thankful exclaimed, taking her at her word and dropping a profusion of courtesies about her.

Now I held and do still hold, that the glamor of nobility is the most mischievous moonshine that ever fostered lunacy in mankind. I was therefore little pleased by Thankful's subservience and still less by our visitor's making this introduction of herself. Indeed, it was properly a bold avoidance of any introduction, for she had told me herself out in the woods that she was an actress, a princess having been her last part. She gave me a glance of recognition out of the tail of her eye, then for Thankful's benefit began a pretence of never having seen me.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"You are Ezra Wilbur the printer? When I saw the name above the door just now, it looked such a plain, big-hearted name that I guessed its owner to be a plain, big-hearted man who would help me out of a sad quandary."

"Help you—how?" I demanded with a brave attempt at severity. "First tell us who you are and why you came to Marietta?"

"She did tell us, Ezra. She is the Princess Eboli. Are you so discourteous as to doubt the word of a princess? Of course we will help her."

"'Tis a strange tale, albeit a true one." Then turning to Thankful, "I am the Princess Eboli, and the reason of my being here I will set forth with the indulgence of your discourteous brother—or is he your brother?"

"He is my betrothed—my lover," Thankful explained proudly.

"And an ardent lover, I'll be bound. A brave man, is he not? Who delights to fight and would hang a ribbon from his mistress on the handle of his hunting-knife and wage a duel with any who might dare to stretch finger after it."

"Ezra? Oh, he doesn't care for ribbons and would bungle such a gallantry."

"Your story," I repeated, this time with real severity. She was making fine sport of me with her double meanings.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"I am the Princess Eboli," she stated it the third time with a fantastic half-challenging waiving of probabilities. "My story can find its mate only in that of the famous Angelica, Princess of Cathay, who, for the after-delight of poets, wandered far from her Orient home and met with the great knight Roland in the forest of Ardennes. You have heard of him?"

I hadn't, nor had Thankful, but we saved the literary reputation of our household by stating that Jared had, for he gave those names to a pair of Thankful's doves.

"Never heard of Roland? He was the flower of chivalry, a gallant, faithful lover like yourself. But Angelica — 'twas a sad sin, was it not, sir? — bewitched him on the moment out in Arden Forest, and turned his heart away from duty and the maid to whom he was betrothed, which same maid was the Lady Alda, sister of that Oliver of whom you would also have heard, had you ever heard of Roland. I played Angelica once, for a season at the Royal Theatre. She is a splendid part and they almost buried me in flowers."

"You played her! You're an actress then. Are you really an actress and Eboli one of your parts?" Thankful was delighted. A theatre, with her, took precedence even of a court.

"Well, to skip a few centuries and pass from the errant Princess Angelica, heroine of half a hundred chansons and epics, to Princess Eboli,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

who must be her own chronicler. I was in London, acting in 'Don Carlos.' One night it happened that when the play was over and the curtain down and the noblemen and macaronies who congregate about a greenroom had dispersed, a frowsy captain met me at the door of the theatre and brought me, willy nilly, ashipboard, over seas. He anchored by a warehouse down the river and left me, a fortnight back, a prisoner on the boat. It was only to-day that I managed to escape. Your frown, sir—does it indicate that you disbelieve my tale?"

"It is passing strange for these prosy times. Why should you be carried off in such brigand fashion?"

"Ah, if you could but explain it! My own thought is that he mistakes me for some one else for he insists I have a part in a conspiracy. It seems there is a conspiracy here."

"There is. We are to have an empire and I am to be a duchess, maybe!"

"A conspiracy—now we are getting near the root. And you are the English emissary."

"Oh, but I am not. You are doing me a grave injustice in saying it. Truly I am not an emissary; though my captain, like yourself, does most strangely seem to think me one. Tell me, sir, for my own enlightenment, what is this conspiracy and who is the emissary with whom everybody is confusing me?"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

I showed her the *Sentinel* extra in a glad relief not unmixed either with doubt. She read it through hurriedly, then slowly, missing never a word. At last she looked up.

"They expect an English emissary. My captain must somehow have mistaken me in London for this English emissary. That is the only reading of it. Mine is a sorry plight—dragged of a misadventure into such a wicked plot. This Nolan the paper mentions—"

"Handsome as his cloak and—a secret—my duke perhaps."

"Wasn't he once connected with Spain, and isn't he—dead?"

Do her an injustice! My sudden impulse in her favor went wavering again. The *Sentinel* said nothing of Nolan's supposed death. Unless she were really an emissary deep in international diplomacies, how could she have this inside knowledge of Nolan?

"He lived for many years in Texas," I explained, "which may have made him love Spain; and Jared, who saw him that night and knows him as well as he knows me, swears he is alive."

Well, she questioned me and I let her draw me out, not realizing that she was drawing me out, till I had explained the cipher to her, the absence of any 'enclosed paper,' Miller's treachery and identity with Colonel Russel, and Jared's suspicions of Wilkinson now and in the



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

old time. And Spain—how she hovered about Nolan and Spain, asking me over and over if Spain was thought to have any share in the conspiracy.

“England, I am sure, would enter no game if there were a chance that Spain sat at the table,” was the nearest she came to admitting her country’s possible complicity. “And why should this Nolan pretend to have been executed by a Spanish governor, unless to carry on Spain’s work the better? A dreadful company for a maid to stumble into. For chivalry’s sake, could you not help me to escape? I have stolen away from the flatboat of this treasonous captain and there is no other shelter for me this side the ocean, unless—may I stay with you for awhile?” she added pathetically.

“She might, Ezra, if we could manage mommy. There is Lucinda, you know, we could say was come to make us a visit.”

Now Eboli pricked up her ears at this opening for her and said she would love to “act” Lucinda, who was my cousin from Pittsburg, and wear Thankful’s clothes and learn to spin, and deceive Ancy Ann, whom Thankful described most graphically. What could I say? Thankful herself had had some years’ experience in wheedling me, and I speedily struck colors to the two of them.

When Thankful had gone away to touch up a room for her occupancy, the visitor turned to

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

me with a bewitching hint of intimacy and close bonds between us.

"A lady's greetings to her cavalier. I have come to claim your protection and the fulfilment of certain pledges. You are not indisposed to a continuation of that charming pastoral of ours?—set in a real Arden Forest, you and I playing to each other; I, a stray princess and you—what are you?"

"Nothing much since Jared came but trapper and pioneer," I answered, prosily enough, not understanding this little game of hers about Arden Forest or the part she wanted me to take in it.

"That's a pity. 'Twould be more romantic were you a king of the Southlands, say, in disguise."

"Lord, 'tis unlikely enough, one royalty sauntering about on Sassafras Hill."

"Unlikely things happen, though, in Arden Forest."

"But Sassafras Hill is in old John Lacy's woods, he with the hair lip and the wen, not Arden Forest at all. And 'twas not I, you went to meet there, but Phil Nolan, who used to be dead and who, according to Governor Tiffin, isn't legally this day anything but a ghost."

"True, I was looking for a different juvenile lead, but fate juggled the cast and assigned you to his part. At the end of the last act,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

we were betrothed—weren't we?—Orlando *in-namorata* already, though surely not Orlando *furioso*, which I take it is Roland, the crazy, for you have a saneness surprising in a habitant of Ardennes. Do I puzzle you? Well, I beg pardon for bringing up again that Roland of whom you reminded me."

Her chaffing gave me strength to look at the matter rationally.

"I doubt me you are the English emissary, and I've no right to give you my house as a center for your plottings."

"You still object to turning traitor for your ladylove; nor need you, sir. 'Tis this way, and my honor's staked upon it. I never heard of this conspiracy up to the time I left London."

"You're not a princess either," I said, disposed, if we meant to be reasonable at all, to insist on this point.

"Not outside of Arden and the theatre. But I am the Pride of London, the greatest actress, and fairest maid—your forgiveness for thus bugling my own merits, but they serve to explain what follows. A scion of the royal house, Frederic Duke of York, in short, son of King George, next younger than the Prince of Wales, elects to love me."

Her manner now was sober matter-of-fact. Acting was laid aside. This, I thought, was truth at last.

"And you?" I asked in a quiver of interest.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"He is powerful, of course, with every resource at his command, a suitor not to be denied; and so I—" she paused purposely, to rouse me to the uttermost.

"And so you?" I said harshly, with a terrible fear.

"I was forced to fly to America for my own safety. When my captain came to the theatre one night and offered me passage, I thought that some kind friend had planned it, understanding my trouble. That is the truth—the whole reason why I am here. You can pardon me that, and will help me hide myself in the wilderness?"

I could have shouted in my relief. "And you chose Marietta to hide in. Out of all the towns in the United States, a blessed chance sent you to hide in Marietta. But wait—Nolan—the camlet cloak—" I added, grasping like a man in a delirium at the shred of a reality which all but eludes him.

"Mrs. Blennerhassett was my schoolmate, my only friend in all America. She knew my story and promised to receive me. She was, moreover, in case I should be followed and tracked down by my royal persecutor, to send a friend of hers, some gallant gentleman on whom she could rely, to meet me and bring me to the Island. The sign was to be a camlet cloak."

"Ah, I see."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"But here I run full tilt into a conspiracy. The camlet cloak has been appropriated by a Spanish knave. Guards turn me back from the Island. Colonel Russel, who, you say, is himself implicated, calls me an English emissary and threatens me with severities unnumbered unless I give him some sort of signal code which, my soul, I never saw and do not have. I'm in narrow straits, sir, and unless you'll lend me aid, I had best—the river's low just now, but I'm not so large. It would be deep enough—wouldn't it?—for me."

That a maid has blue eyes is not, I am aware, a logical reason for putting confidence in her words. But when the blue eyes are reinforced with tears and shivers of despair, and blooming womanhood turns for protection to man's chivalry—well, her story was more than probable. They were a wild lot, those English princes, as every one knew, and I was glad to have her a common woman and no kin to them. I believed her; and with a few blunt sentences I gave her my home, my goods, my sword, my blood, myself—everything I had or hoped, begging that she would honor me by their acceptance and think no more of the river, which really wasn't deep enough just then for even so small a creature to drown in comfortably.

"Thank you," she said with a sweet, maddening pressure of my hand, "for your confidence



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

and generosity. I have been buffeted so long. Even the captain who brought me here, did so under the same misapprehension. He swears by all the residents of heaven, hell, and purgatory that I am of a truth an English envoy carrying precious papers necessary to Burr, and that, willing or not, he will make me surrender them as sure as Saint Michael waits by the throne above. You may yet have to defend me against him.”

Defend her against him!—indeed I would, and against Miller and Burr and all the coterie of villains who were mistaking her for one of themselves. My belief in her I tucked that moment with the little knot of ribbon back of my hunting knife in a mad challenge to the world to doubt her.

## CHAPTER IX

WHEN the princess retired with Thankful to her room, I recalled blissfully my first meeting with her out in Lacy's woods. I have since made careful research concerning this matter of Arden Forest. It is, they tell me, a hunting ground of romance, whose geographical location is unknown, where everybody is in love, and

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

exiled kings are foresters and wrestlers go a-courting duchesses, and dukes and princes and the like start up from behind trees without rhyme or reason. If that's the sum of it, why mightn't we, as Eboli insisted, have a home-grown Arden Forest down by Marietta, instead of chasing into poetry for one? A wrestler and a duchess—as well a princess and a pioneer. I have since bought Sassafras Hill from old man Lacy. Many conceive me cheated, for the place is ill adapted to farming, but I leave it to any one if nine dollars an acre is aught too much to pay for a warranty deed and possession in fee simple of a demesne in the famous wood of Ardennes.

Well, Eboli looked very winsome when she reappeared in Thankful's pinafore. She bound me not to give a word or hint to any one of her identity, so when I joined Jared at the tavern later, I buttoned my lips and kept my secret. The tavern was full of roisterers and Jared, usually the most roistering, sat apart, moody and flushed with drink.

"I am glad to be set squarely against Wilkinson and Miller," he confided. "But Governor Tiffin—Ezra, it does just knock a fellow's heart out to be suspected by Governor Tiffin. Seed corn that must be stored unopened—what is it that is being passed off for seed corn? Munitions of war, say, tied up in sacks; but seed corn it isn't. I'll not move from this

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

place till I make up my mind about it. And the white diamond—”

There was a stranger in the corner with a ruddy, weather-beaten face, telling merry tales of pirates to a group opposite. Strangers were no novelty those days with the flood of emigrants that poured down the Ohio river, and Jared noted him only to lapse back to the eternal problem of seed corn and diamond. Some friends questioned as to his reception by Governor Tiffin, but he only referred them to the mass meeting of Vigilants on the morrow. When they jested on his unwonted sullenness, speaking his name, the stranger in the corner dropped his pirates and came forward.

“Jared Dalrymple? Ye’ll not be afther telling me ’tis Jared Dalrymple, the captor of Black Pigeon? Sure and I am glad to meet a man can do a feat like that. Will ye drink with me? That’s right. Look at me well before ye decide. My name? Michael O’Mal-lory, bedad, at yer service. A bould youth of forty-three, been in every skirmish from the Rebellion of ’98 to the Barbary wars, indifferent handsome, not to be overlooked by the ladies nor yet identified by me beauty. Irish? Of course. Had a letter of introduction from Thomas A. Emmet to Blennerhas-sett, who, if he is a thraitor here, is a good pathrit at home. Me residence? Nowhere. Me purpose? Adventure. Out for a spree and

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

in for a time. Set your pace, and if I fail to keep it, the devil take me for a tortoise. High—low—jack—a whistle and let's start."

"Beshrew me," said Jared, "but you are the sort of man I love. I will do more than drink; I will even fight you if you wish."

"Good for ye. A row, a carouse, or anny-thing inspiriting, and Michael O'Mallory is yer man. Say there's an island on earth save Ireland, or another color than green, and it'll be—hit hard and hit fast to the sthrains of the Harp of Tara. Come outside and let's at it."

"No, I will say none of these things. I only thought of fighting because I've been having some trouble."

"Begorra, so have I. Come outside, mavourneen, and I'll tell ye about it."

It was evident, even to me, that the man only wanted a private talk, but despite the coaxing tone, Jared refused to be lured away from his table.

"The first throuble I've had since I 'listed in Poland, and the 'ufskys' and 'owskys' rubbed off all me handsome brogue. Come outside and I will tell ye."

Then, when Jared shook his head; "Bedad, I'll tell ye here." He leaned over and whispered:

"I've just lost a princess"—I started—"and a white diamond."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Jared started, a smile of triumph coming to his face. He struck his fist on the table as if he fancied Wilkinson was under it and sprang to his feet.

"I will come outside—for a farm, I will! Got any money, Ezra? Pay for a drink all around and come along."

Outside, O'Mallory made Jared vouch for me with an important show of mystery. Then he led the pair of us through the trees to a canoe by the river.

"Water holds no listeners unless it is dead ones," he remarked sententiously.

When he had paddled us well out into the stream, he rested oars.

"I have lost my princess," he repeated. "Up here by the warehouse she slipped away. I had the foinest room in this tavern bespoke for her, but where is she? Of all unmanageable creatures, commend me to her for a fluff ball of conthradictions! As if she had not made me throuble enough on the voyage over without losing her at the tip of it!"

"You are talking Greek, man. A princess—what have I to do with princesses?"

"Sure, and perhaps ye didn't know she was to be a princess, eh? Come to think, it was only meself who insisted on that point. 'I shan't let them put ye off with any commoner, Harman,' I said to Blennerhassett. 'Nobility alone shall ye have dealings with. Let the



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

British send their best.' The which stand I took out of my pride as an Irishman for 'tis seldom enough an Irishman has opportunity to be nippy toward England. As for Wilkinson, he wasn't particular who the English emissary was so only it was an accredited one."

"Emissary?—ah, the English emissary!"

"Sure, I just brought her over. But, as I say, she's give me the slip—slid out—don't know where she is."

"Hold, man. You are telling me all this—whom do you take me to be?"

"I take ye to be Jared Dalrymple, the man in the camlet cloak, and General Wilkinson's own agent. Who else could ye be?"

"Wait," shouted Jared. "I was never born for a detective. Plague on this cumbersome honor of mine that is tripping me. It is a temptation to let you go on, but I can't. You've got the wrong man. I am an agent of Governor Tiffin, set to run you conspirators to the ground. I've no sympathy with Burr, while as for Wilkinson, I'd give my lady's beauty to see him disgraced as he deserves. Now go on if you choose."

"I will," was the cheerful response. "The General said, when he referred me to ye, that ye'd likely take just such a stand."

"A trifle slower, please. The General—General Wilkinson—referred you—to me? When?"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Not a week gone, at Cincinnati, at Fort Washington. He was there on military duty, which, as I take it, is all the duty he has. I left my princess anchored here on the flatboat while I went to Cincinnati and sought an interview with him. He said, 'I cannot risk threatening with ye or her myself. Go back to Marietta. Ye will find there my agent, wanst a favrit throoper of mine, who in his day captured the chief, Black Pigeon. He has the camlet cloak agreed upon and his name is Jared Dalrymple.' And faith, there's no mistaking that name more than Michael O'Mallory."

"Perhaps some one was imposing on you. Are you sure 'twas Wilkinson who told you this?"

"To hear the lad talk, ye'd think I'd never carried messages from Burr to him cross counthry and back again."

"But I'm not his agent and I have no camlet cloak. 'Favorite trooper'—fine sarcasm! Do you mind, Ezra, with what joy he clapped his favorite trooper into a guard-house?"

O'Mallory looked at Jared long; then he gave vent to his feelings in a deliberate wink.

"Faith, 'tis a cautious lot ye are; but keep it up, insist on yer loyalty, muster yer Vigilants, and talk against us all ye like. But we know ye'll act with us as right as right, and that is all we want."

"Wait a moment. I'm a bit stunned. Whom do you represent? Who is 'us'?"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"I am for Blennerhassett, and Blennerhassett is for Burr. I'm the new chief of the warehouse. I'm a soldier of fortune and I hope, please Saint Michael, to be made marshal of the new empire. We'll begin at the beginning."

"I think," commented Jared, "we'd better; clear at the beginning with Burr's first intentions."

"Well, it was this way. Burr and Blennerhassett began intending a two year back, when war was likely between the United States and Mexico. Burr was to take advantage of the war, organize a regiment, get a general's commission and march South. Then when he had conquered Texas and Mexico, he meant to imitate Napoleon, seize on these western states as well, and erect an empire out of the batch. Blennerhassett was to finance the Napoleon and in return, to be ambassador from the empire to St. James'. Blennerhassett told me about it when I first came to the Island with me introduction from Thomas A. Emmet. 'Are ye with us?' he says. 'Bedad, I am,' says I. 'Me heart's with Ireland, and she's the only counthray I'm caring to see free. This Mississippi Valley, republic or empire, 'tis the same to me. I'm with the daringest set of men—which is ye and Burr.'"

"Well?"

"Well, they appointed me to oversee the collection of boats, soldiers, and ammunition.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

So long as Spain was afther obstructing the United States' navigation of the Mississippi, and war talk was rife against Mexico, there was no need of secrecy. All the rayspectable pathrits approved, thinking of course we were only going to fight Spain and knowing nawthing of the projected empire. Even General Andy Jackson said to Burr, 'tis on record, 'I hate the Dons,' he said,\* 'and I'll gladly die in the last ditch to take Texas from them and to hurt their feelings and such.' But the war fell through, and when we kept together and retained our war trappings, the rayspectable pathrits began to suspect us and fling us curses instead of compliments. Burr was still hot for his empire, and we went on gathering stores and recruits, screwing ourselves up to fight Spain on our own account; and pushing forward, kind of secretly, preparations for our expedition South. In order to have an honest pretext, Burr bought forty thousand dollars worth of land in Texas, though, faith, five thousand was all he ever paid for it, and Blennerhassett paid that — 'tis little I'd take his note for. Well, he makes believe now that he wants to take his soldiers, boats, and stores South to colonize this land."

---

\*"I hate the Dons. I would delight to see Mexico reduced, but I would die in the last ditch before I would see the Union dismembered."

—GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

“And Wilkinson?”

“’Tis this way. Our flatboats are not ships of the line, nor our recruits reel soldiers. To conquer Mexico and gain his empire, Burr must have a fleet and an army; so he looks about for them. Arrah, now. Go ’way! Ye know all this.”

“Never mind. Tell it again. It is not in the least monotonous, eh Ezra? Give us Wilkinson.”

“Faith, Wilkinson has much to gain from an empire, but he doesn’t mean to jeopardize what he already has in the republic, do ye see? So he says to Burr, not the words, mind, but the idee, he says, ‘Go get yer fleet and show me ye have fair prospects of succeeding and I will give my army to the cause, but never a move will I make till ye get a fleet.’ Then Burr sends to England to King George, and he says, not in them words either, ‘Ye mean to cut the United States in two alive, slit it like a fish down its back through the Alleghanies. We are agreed. Ye also mean to throuble Spain—whom we hate worse than does General Andy Jackson—and take Mexico from her; a proceeding which will draw tears from the sympathetic heart of Bonaparte, and also keep his troops busy. ’Tis a noble aim, Mr. Burr. Go ahead and get yer army and show us ye have a fair chance of succeeding, and I’ll have a fleet in the Gulf of Mexico, as sure as me name’s King George, to assist ye.’”



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Well?" prodded Jared.

"Well, right there the wheels locked. England wanted to help, Wilkinson wanted to help; neither would take the initiative. Each demanded that the other be committed first. So I go to London and arrange for King George's emissary to meet Wilkinson's emissary here about Marietta. No wan is willing to give signed warrants, and it is decided that Wilkinson's agent wear the green camlet—yer camlet—the like of which there's not another in all Europe. England's agent is to identify himself—or herself, as it happens—by one of the crown jewels, a diamond so brilliant that ye can see by the light of it."

"And the English envoy—who is she?" I asked, speaking for the first time.

"Charles Fox—he's the Prime-minister, which over there is ring-master of the government, same as President here, and the bye with whom diplomacies have to be arranged. Well, he was for sending an actress, a certain Mary Ann\* appertaining to the Dook of York, which loidy, they say, got herself and her Dook into a desprit scrape along of her auctioning off appointments in the army and jobs in the church. He is Field-marshal, do ye see, and had the bestowing of commissions, but she just took them from him with her pretty

---

\* Query—Does Mr. Wilbur refer to the once famous Mary Ann Clark?—C. B.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

eyes and handed them over wherever money was thickest. We don't want any of her. Besides she is a shrewd head and would soon get the better of us. I don't know her meself. She's not on me calling list. So I told him Blennerhassett was no man to threat with actresses and wanted the true blue nobility. Then Fox said, with a look I can't just interpret, "Very well. Blennerhassett is right. Ye shall have wan of the nobility. Ye shall have a reel princess, the Princess Eboli. Our fleet will cruise about in the Gulf of Mexico. At Marietta, this princess will give ye its signal code in exchange for the papers promised from Burr and Wilkinson.' "

"They'd not send a princess," Jared objected, "nor is Eboli an English name."

"Sure, and it's hers, for when I asked at the theatre where the rendezvous was to occur for Eboli, bellboys, grooms, and singers all pointed her out by that name. They have a raft of names, them princesses, and an income, too, voted to each wan of them, which the same is wrung out of Ireland. And she has the diamond for certain. Ye could see by its light of a night in the cabin."

"A theatre! Man, she was Mary Ann the actress, after all, and Eboli only her name in the play."

"A princess, I tell ye—a provoking baggage of a princess—bad cess to her with her

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

half dozen stories and her curls and her frills. Her traits prove her a true sister of the Prince of Wales. Faith, home rule and our taxes for ourselves will shut us of the lot of them."

An actress, the Duke of York, the Princess Eboli—there was in O'Mallory's talk an array of facts calculated to disillusion any man less confident than I of his mistress. But even while he spoke I had explained them away. I let the wicked Mary Ann he mentioned, be the person intended by Charles Fox for the envoy. Then, as she was also an actress, I set her to enacting the part of Princess Eboli at a second playhouse. Lastly, I allowed O'Mallory to blunder into the wrong theatre and carry off my sweet, persecuted maiden by mistake, while Mary Ann remained behind in London. As for the diamond—bah, what actress was without fine diamonds?

I give the above as an example of what the human intellect, when hard put to, can achieve in the way of distorting the obvious and harmonizing unpleasant facts with a pleasing theory.

"Princess or actress," Jared declared, "it doesn't matter, if she has the diamond."

"Wilkinson's very words. But now we're here, and just as she is wanted, she's decamped. I had a scene with her down the river. It seem ye and yer cloak were to meet her on Sassafras Hill, and ye never came anear. I

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

held ye never got the word but there was no quieting her. She's for scenting treachery in Wilkinson with every whiff of her nose. I daresay she means to study into the matter for herself and we'll see no more of her till she's satisfied the General and ye are playing fair. Wander about in that green cloak of yers—couldn't ye now? and doubtless she'd come out of her hols and bespeak ye."

Jared took the oars and began pushing back ashore.

"I can't put on the cloak, for I haven't it."

"Ye are too prudent. Ye think she has withdrawn and overboard it may go. Come, like a darlint."

But his pleading was vain. As we parted, Jared handed him a copy of the *Sentinel* extra. "You will find in there some information about the man in camlet. Thank you for whiling the evening away with such a very pretty tale."

## CHAPTER X

ANCY ANN was at home when we returned. Eboli, as we had agreed, had been presented to her as Cousin Lucinda come from Pittsburg on a visit. Of a verity she could act, as she said. A demurer creature with her downcast eyes and her timid "yes, ma'ams," I

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

never hope to see. Ancy Ann held her up to Thankful as the very pattern of modesty and domesticity. It was only when she met Jared that the coquetry of her other self showed forth.

"Blue eyes," he said with a teasing glance at Thankful, who is dark as a senorita, "swords and pistols, but I love blue eyes and golden curls! I consider myself Ezra's brother and therefore your cousin—Miss Lucinda, pardon a cousin's familiarity."

With which he kissed her squarely on the lips, much, I could see, to Thankful's annoyance. Nor, I confess, did I myself relish the pertness with which the blue eyes thus complimented smiled into his own. As I have said, Jared was a very handsome fellow.

"What, glowering, Ezra, at me? Am I not your brother then? For the first time in his life, Ezra glowers at me—now I wonder why?"

He looked from me to Eboli and his glance was keen. I knew he began to suspect something.

"But no matter," he went on gaily enough. "Though Ezra disown me, I shall persist in my fraternal love toward Thankful and Mistress Ancy Ann. Where did you pick up this—er—cousin of yours, Ezra?"

Of a certainty, he held the same spell over me that Burr did over Blennerhassett. Whatever he asked, I must needs answer truthfully.



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"In the *Sentinel* office" was on the tip of my tongue, when Eboli interposed and told the amazingest tale of her home in Pittsburg, her trip down the river, how the boat put her off at Marietta, and how she hunted through the town for Ancy Ann, whom she well remembered and dear old Ezra, whom she had seen once in childhood. It was all a part of her faculty for acting, yet the ready words hurt me just as her freedom with Jared had done. You see, I had sentiments about her loftiness and half divinity and she was hardly living up to them.

Ancy Ann was so taken with Eboli's artless manner, that she failed to notice any discrepancies, but not so, Jared.

"A ravishing little hussuf," he said, when he had bundled me into the printing office before I could get a word alone with her. "Where did you get her and what are you doing with her here? Ezra, you are blushing like a girl. What!—she has won you over already and you have promised to keep her secrets. Dear Simplicity—what a likely target you are for blue eyes to aim at. Well, keep your word and her confidences, too. You needn't tell them me. I can guess. Her story was fair plausible only—there was no boat came from Pittsburg to-day. Besides, such finish of coquetry doesn't grow this side the Atlantic. And, Ezra, mark, her sleeve fell back

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

when she reached up as I kissed her and a flash from her arm caught me in the eye. It was a diamond—*the* diamond. A ravishing little hussuf," he repeated. "An actress masquerading as a princess, posing as a country lass. It is worth the price of admission."

It was useless to argue her innocence to him. I could scarcely convince him or he me. So I jumped straight to the important point.

"What are you going to do?"

"I don't know. I have been wondering what I can do. O'Mallory and she are both active enemies of the United States. I am in the United States' service. Obviously I ought to arrest both, forthwith."

I started to protest but Jared waved me quiet.

"I don't think I shall arrest them—not forthwith, because if I did I would have not an iota of evidence. It is no crime for Eboli to wear a diamond and pretend to be a maid she isn't. If I arrest her, I should only for my pains find it turn out a worse fiasco than did my recognition of Nolan."

"Then you will let her stay here?" I asked eagerly. The question shows how firm a grasp he had on me.

"Nay, 'tis your house, and 'tis you will let her stay. No matter, not so glum, Ezra—it will be something to have her under our eye. But mind you, guard that tongue of yours."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Presently Jared continued thoughtfully:

"And if I arrest O'Mallory, he will simply deny everything he told us to-night. Miller and General Wilkinson will help him clear himself, always at my expense. Even if I convicted him, the conspiracy would go merrily on for the two essential elements just now, the princess and Nolan, the camlet cloak and diamond, would still be at large with Miller to abet them. Wilkinson is in these parts, it seems. Probably Miller conferred with him on his way to Chillicothe—he went by boat, you know. It was a bold move sending O'Mallory to me. If I undertake now to make evidence out of Wilkinson's dalliance with Burr and English emissaries, he can say, 'Look you, I am innocent. Why, I voluntarily turned over the conspirators, O'Mallory, and all, to Jared Dalrymple, Governor Tiffin's accredited agent and my undoubted enemy. Would any but an innocent man have done that?' This thing alone would acquit him. He has gagged my suspicions, and only proof, indisputable proof, will convince the Governor of his treachery."

"Perhaps he is not so guilty as you suspect," for I had faith in human kind, and was glad to cut down the list of traitors by one, whenever it was possible. "Truly, why should he refer O'Mallory to you unless he were innocent?"

"I am not sure. Nolan can't get to the Island, and I can. I think Wilkinson and Mil-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

ler intend to implicate me; in fact, they have already implicated me, so, in a sense, I am in their power. Possibly they mean me to wear the cloak, as Miller suggested, take the risks myself, and then force me somehow to give my information to them. Or more likely, Nolan, being dead himself, is planning to impersonate me and throw the guilt on me. One thing is certain—the Wilkinson party mean to forward this conspiracy of Burr's to the extent that, if it prospers, they will profit by it; otherwise they will face about, coming out of it with safety for themselves and the devil take the hindermost. I rather fancy, Ezra," he added, "that they have cast you and me for the rôle of hindermost, as Cousin Lucinda would put it. This O'Mallory is a refreshing one to meet. He plays to win or lose on a straight deal and doesn't have his sleeves stuffed with counter-plots."

Next day, there was an unusually large meeting of Vigilants to learn the results of our trip to Chillicothe. Frank Miller was back among them, much as ever, though with a more determined and triumphant bearing. His name was still on our rolls as Vigilant.

Jared announced rather formally that Governor Tiffin had bade him keep unbroken patrol about the Island. He reiterated all he had said hitherto about the man in the camlet cloak—the Vigilants being as yet ignorant of

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Nolan's supposed death. He ended by reading them the translated message, discussing earnestly with them what this seed corn was like to be.

Then Frank Miller spoke. He did not doubt, he said, the word of so honest a man as Jared, but the most honest man might err. Whereupon he read from some newspaper files of eighteen hundred and one the whole story of Nolan's execution at Waco, Texas.

"You see," he ended, "Philip Nolan this man couldn't have been,"—and as for the cloak, had any one seen this famous green camlet cloak, he questioned, besides Jared? Oh, no, surely, he meant nothing by asking—he only wished to know, as a matter of fact, *if* any one but Jared, or perhaps a certain sweetheart of Jared's *had* seen the camlet cloak.

It was Jared himself who replied.

"If your question is intended as an impeachment of my word, you will either withdraw it or answer to me."

"Certainly, I withdraw it, if the gentleman puts so much stress on it. One would think I had charged him with being an accomplice of this man in camlet, with naming him Nolan because a dead man makes no rebuttals, and with handing over a senseless message about seed corn, while he keeps back in the interests of the treason the 'enclosed paper,' saying that it is not enclosed. As if we did not know that



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

adventurous men like Jared Dalrymple are always for law and the government!"

The irony of his remarks and the discredit that he further cast on Jared, as he continued his talk, told. There was much confusion and criticism, so unstable is popularity.

Miller continued, saying much as he had said to Governor Tiffin, that if he had seemed to doubt Mr. Dalrymple, he was not prompted by animosity. In these times when any one might be a conspirator, it was imprudent for an organization to trust any man so far as the Vigilants trusted Jared. He marshaled up again his little battalion of points against Jared, officered as usual by Nolan's death. He reviewed them and dress-paraded them and put them through bewildering evolutions, till one lost track of their number and believed them a regiment. Then he announced, as his justification, his own commission from General Wilkinson. He described his trip to Chillicothe, and for a climax, told "what Mr. Dalrymple had inadvertently omitted," that the Governor recognized himself as Wilkinson's agent, distrusted Jared, and had bade him see that Jared, as captain of the Vigilants, made no move hostile to the Union.

Jared listened respectfully till he was done. Then he sprang up, his face flushed, his voice trembling.

"Wilkinson's agent! Boys, I may be the roistering good-for-naught that this man calls

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

me, but when have I deceived you? This cipher message comes from Wilkinson, and Miller knows it. Wilkinson's very self is one of the conspirators and is, this moment, plotting to disrupt the country. This thing I know. I can not prove it—yet; but I know it. My word, always unbroken, ought to have some weight now. Before you question it, recall Miller's own sentence of a moment back, 'Any one these times may be a conspirator. It is prudent to trust none too far'—not even the General of the 'Legion of the West.' Wilkinson's agent! Let Wilkinson's agent explain what this mysterious seed corn is that his master sends the traitors. Let you set a trap for it when it reaches Marietta and capture it. Powder, muskets it may be, but corn it is not. Oh, Miller knows. Look at his face this moment while he denies knowing. Note him as he says that belike 'tis really corn, and tries to divert you from it to other parts of the message. If it is corn, it will bear looking into. Locate and capture this corn, boys. If it is contraband, why should he be interested in our not hunting it down—unless he or his master is concerned in it? I will stake my reputation here. If this thing, being sent, is corn as he would have us believe, then hang me to the nearest tree for a traitor."

Now the tide turned against Miller, who was chattering away of camlet cloak, "enclosed

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

paper," emissary, anything in short, most obviously anything, as Jared said, to divert attention.

In the babel that ensued, the door suddenly opened, and we beheld our most respected citizen, General Rufus Putnam, the town's father. After some compliments to us as an organization, he said:

"I have a piece of work for you. It is this way. A Federal agent visited me this morning. It seems that a while ago, a load of gold was smuggled through a southern custom-house from Mexico in the guise of corn. The fact was known soon after, and detectives traced it up the Mississippi and Ohio, finding at every town that it had already passed. But Marietta, whither it was probably bound, it has not yet reached, though it has been heard of just down the river this side of the Island. As the agents' business took them on to Washington, they left the matter with me. I turn it over to you."

"Gold—for a farm! Not ammunition, but gold!" Jared exclaimed above the cheers of the Vigilants.

All trace of order was lost now. There was shouting and hurrahing, though we scarce knew over what. The only thought clear to the whole assembly—at least, the only one clear to me, was that a load of gold was a monstrous bonny thing and worth a tolerable enthusiasm. None doubted its connection in some wise with the treason, except Frank Miller, whose affected

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

doubt was drowned in the uproar. Oh, it was a delight to all and compensation for the monotony of guard duties to find the treason showing up so picturesquely, tricked out with loads of gold and camlet cloaks and diamonds.

Then Jared ordered :

"Detachment A will patrol down the river as far as Belpre. Detachment B will beat the woods from the north down. Mr. Miller, remain on duty in this office. Ezra and I will go up to the warehouse and see what we can learn there. Prepare to march at two."

As we walked toward the warehouse, Jared said:

"It was a close corner to-day, and I broke the Governor's order by bringing in Wilkinson's name; but Miller forced me to it. He knew all the time it was gold, the traitor. And it comes from Mexico, the very country Burr is going to fight. Now would Spain or Spanish residents under the circumstances send money to Burr?"

After some musing, he went on:

"In the 'nineties, Spain paid to Wilkinson mule-loads and horse-loads of gold, at Nashville, Frankfort, and where not? And Nolan was the agent.\* Miller knew what this corn was,

---

\* The first charge in the court-martial of General Wilkinson reads:

"That the said James Wilkinson, while in the military service and holding the commission of brigadier-general in the army of the United States, did corruptly stipulate

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

and Miller is Wilkinson's agent. Nolan, the same dead Nolan, is concerned in it. The cipher message directs that it be stored unopened. Do you suppose Burr and O'Mallory,

---

to receive, and by virtue of such stipulation, did actually receive, by way of pension or stipend, divers sums of money from the officers and agents of a foreign power; that is to say, from the Spanish officers and agents, for the intent and with the purpose of combining and co-operating with that power, in designs adverse to the laws and policy, and hostile to the peace, interests, and union of these states; contrary to his duty and allegiance as a citizen.

Specification 1. Two mule-loads of money (the amount unknown) being received at New Orleans, for the use of him, the said James Wilkinson, etc.

Specification 2. Two other mule- or horse-loads of money (the amount unknown) being received by him, the said James Wilkinson, assisted by one Philip Nolan . . . in 1789, also on account of said pension.

Other specifications cover amounts of ten thousand dollars, eight thousand dollars, etc., sent at different times, up to 1804.

Specification 7. Nine thousand six hundred and forty dollars, in the summer of 1796, taken by one Thomas Power to Louisville, and by him delivered to one Philip Nolan, by direction and for the use of said James Wilkinson, on account of said pension, etc.

In Specification 10, same charge, Daniel Clark is mentioned as entering a secret conference with Wilkinson concerning this pension.

It is but fair to add that General Wilkinson was acquitted of these charges, though by no means triumphantly, and history has reversed the court-martial's verdict. Thus Mr. Ezra Wilbur's narrative regarding the gold and the General's treachery, seems not incredible.

— C. B.



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

who has charge of the warehouse and who is probably to store it, could really think it corn? Could it be possible that Wilkinson means to betray the United States to Burr, and then in consideration for all this gold, sell out Burr and his empire to Spain? 'Twould be like him. Faith, 'twould be his very masterpiece."

I did not suppose anything about it and said as much. I can only attribute honest motives to people. If they fall short of those, never can I scent them through their labyrinths of treachery, as can Jared.

### CHAPTER XI

WE FOUND O'Mallory chuckling over the *Sentinel* extra, that Jared had given him the night before.

"'Tis a knowing wan ye are. Phil Nolan, the man in camlet, and no wan saw him but yerself—and this message of 'v's' and 'h's' ye got from him, bedad, and were going with so fast to Chillicothe. A foine story that—to tell the Governor. Poor man, he doesn't know Phil Nolan's dead and what the 'v's' and 'h's' mean, else he'd have asked ye for the 'enclosed paper' that ye've got yet."

"He does know Nolan is dead, and he did ask for the 'enclosed paper.'"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Ye didn't read the cipher to him?"

"He knew it anyway. Wilkinson has played you false, given up the Burr correspondence, and put it all in the hands of Governor Tiffin."

"The devil he has! But no, 'tis yarning ye are, for doesn't Wilkinson want an empire nigh as bad as Burr? Ye'er not thinking he is afther dealing double with us?" \*

"Double? Thribble—quadruple! Double dealing is too simple for him. Why, man, he even thinks in cipher, so that if you'd break open his head and rake in among his brains you would be none the wiser. What do you think this seed corn is, that you are asked to store unopened?"

O'Mallory's puzzled look acquitted him of any guilty knowledge of the gold.

---

\* Regarding General Wilkinson's connection with Burr and Spain, here and hereafter, in Mr. Ezra Wilbur's narrative, a reference to the court-martial brings out these facts:

Wilkinson was charged with confederating himself with "known traitors, that is to say with one Aaron Burr and his associates"; with furthering the Burr conspiracy in various ways, and with combining with Burr to set on foot a military expedition against the Spanish provinces.

Though the two are shown by the evidence to have been close friends and confidants, General Wilkinson is acquitted; partly because, in view of Burr's previous acquittal at Richmond, he could not in law be called a "known traitor"; partly on account of General Wilkinson's evident friendliness in 1805 and 1806 toward Spain,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Corn. What should it be but corn? It is to be stored unopened, because it is Daniel Clark's levy toward the colonizing—ye know we pretend to be honest colonizers; and Daniel Clark paints his name across the straps the sacks are tied with instead of on the sacks. So, as long as those straps haven't been disturbed, they show we have had legitimate mercantile relations with him and our messengers back and forth are explained."

"A rather bungling fix-up—for Wilkinson," Jared remarked. "I suppose that is the reason he gives to keep you from meddling."

Then he slowly and deliberately repeated all that General Putnam had just said, and spoke, as well, of the mule-loads of Spanish gold by which Wilkinson's good will had been purchased in the 'nineties.

"I tell you this, not because I have any sympathy with your projects, but only so that

---

it being found that, at the time of the conspiracy and the projected war between the United States and Spain, the General was "zealously and incessantly employed in effecting an honorable peace."

Burr himself certainly counted on Wilkinson's assistance, as witness his famous cipher letter to Wilkinson stating that all was well, that the English fleet would be in the mouth of the Mississippi to aid them, etc.

Wilkinson did in the end betray Burr most heartlessly to the United States. All of which would seem to substantiate Mr. Wilbur's opinion that he was from the first playing on three sides.—C. B.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

you will aid me in establishing the General's duplicity. He was always a friend of Spain. Is it likely he would help Burr fight Spain? Is it likely Spain is sending him money unless he is a friend? I'll wager Wilkinson means to use Burr as a cat's-paw. When you have won your empire, he will betray it just as he is betraying the United States now; and in return for these loads of gold, will give it all from Louisiana to Ohio over to the court at Madrid. Maybe your princess decamped because she got wind of this scheme. England at any rate must be honest in support of Burr. What is your idea of me now? Do you still think me an agent of Wilkinson's and telling you this?"

"Yes, begob—ye'er his agent for he said so. But ye'er ashamed of him, as well ye may be, the dirty dog! 'Tis the square man ye'er proving yerself, who wants to see Burr succeed. Put on yer camlet and hunt up my princess. We will go on with our plans and, sure, the minute Wilkinson gives over the army to us, out he goes from its chief command before he has a chance to give it over to Spain. Ye have that 'enclosed paper'?"

"No," said Jared. "There was none."

"None?"

"None on my soul! What was it to be?"

"Well," in a cautious whisper, "'twas to be a signed list of the posts and men he would surrender. And the rascally scamp didn't dare

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

to send it. It's none so dainty being a thractor but a thractor to a thractor—Saint Michael save me from such! Ye see, it was intended for the princess as a guarantee of Wilkinson's good faith, for 'twould ruin him forever if it ever came into the hands of the United States. Her signal code, the which as I take it is the summonses to the English fleet, she'll never give us till she has that 'enclosed paper.' ”

“There was planned a straight exchange of documents then, signal code for Wilkinson's list, one for one, fair fashion?”

“One for two, begob. She's got to have given her not only the 'enclosed paper,' which isn't enclosed, but a signed warrant of Burr's as well, stating that all is right and Wilkinson for once is square and empowering her to treat with him. This Burr order is at the Island with Blennerhassett. She can get that easy enough, if ye'll just let her shlip through yer pathrol. Oh, we'll get on somehow.”

“I don't see how, if this 'enclosed paper,' which we don't have, is a necessary part of the price due for the aid of the English fleet.”

“Man, this 'enclosed paper' is ralely nothing to us. Wilkinson is willing to give us his army, even though he doesn't want to admit it in writing. That paper was only a personal safeguard for her. Ye see, she'll be in a worse hole than the Mary Ann they were afther send-



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

ing, if she goes back to England without her signal code or its equivalent, which is the Burr warrant and Wilkinson's lists. One or the other she must have, else there's a score for her to settle with me friend, Mither Fox," for the news of Fox's death had not yet reached Marietta. "A counthry's mighty ungrateful about disowning a diplomat who bungles a diplomacy. Her scrapes, though, aren't ours. We must have that signal code, and if she won't give it peaceably, being as we haven't the price to pay for it, why—this is a brigandish enterprise from the outset and we'll just have to hold her up and take it."

"Do you mean to use violence?" I asked anxiously.

"'Tis not me way, using aught but gallantry toward beauchus females. No, darlint. But Wilkinson and this double dipped scoundhrel of a Miller, they want that code the same as we do. Lave her to them. They'll apply the violence—they're not above it. We'll just come up afther it's over, disapproving their methods and profiting by the results with a clean chivalrous conscience. Inthroduce her to Miller, that's all ye need to do; and then stand off with yer eyes shut and yer face turned the other way. When he gets the code, he'll give it to me as captain of the boats and there ye are; and Wilkinson, thanks to yer timely warning, muzzled from hurting us. Oh, 'tis an em-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

pire we'll have yet, praise be! with its latch string always hanging out to Ireland."

Jared was immensely worried, as was I also, by this talk with O'Mallory.

"It stands this way then," he said to me; "Eboli has the signal code essential to the empire, Blennerhassett has the Burr warrant O'Mallory mentioned, and Nolan probably has that 'enclosed paper.' Eboli won't treat with Nolan or give up her code, especially in view of Wilkinson's suspected connection with Spain, till she has the Burr warrant, and she can't get that without breaking patrol to the Island. As long as we keep her away from Blennerhassett, then, the empire is blocked, unless—"

"There's Miller," I interrupted in a quiver for my sweetheart's personal safety. "He is so gentlemanly, surely he would never go to the lengths O'Mallory suggested."

"There's more cold violence inside these steely men than would make a dozen blusters. She won't willingly give up her code without Burr's order, which, thanks to our patrol, she can't secure. Ergo, from Miller's standpoint, she must give it up unwillingly. Ezra, we must watch her wherever she goes and warn her not for one moment to put herself in Miller's power."

I lost no time in administering the warning. I fear Eboli drew from me most of our talk with O'Mallory, but at all events I did

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

inspire her with a mighty terror of the conspirators and she promised to remain close indoors whenever Jared or I was not by to protect her. She managed to escape O'Mallory's observation, but Miller shortly discovered her whereabouts, and, calling often at the house and falling in with her story, affected to pay court to her as Cousin Lucinda.

In the days following, though every road was guarded and every passing boat searched, we heard no more of the seed corn. Eboli, as Cousin Lucinda, stayed on with us, learning to spin and knit and make a sampler. Ancy Ann was greatly shocked and thought many a hard thing of our aunt in Pittsburg because she had never taught the girl the cross-stitch.

Despite her gaiety in the presence of others, Eboli showed to me privately an immense amount of distress over Miller's persecution and Jared's suspicions of her. She longed more ardently every day to visit Mrs. Blennerhassett and pour out her sorrows to a feminine confidant and sympathizer.

Once when I sought to coax away her tears, as my custom was, by telling her that I had confidence in her though all the world doubt, she interrupted me almost irritably:

"You say that; you always say that—but you haven't, else you would take me to my friends at the Island."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"I? Why, it's against my orders. Jared would never allow it."

"Jared never said he believed me anything but a conspirator."

"Do you mean, take you without telling him?"

"I meant nothing. It is natural enough that Jared's logic should prevail over your faith."

I don't know whether she purposely hit onto this subject, but it is like she'd heard that faith, pure and simple, was my stronghold. There was much objection to my baptism when I was converted, on the ground that I was deficient in faith since I did not believe the miracles. "Who says I don't believe them?" I had demanded rather fiercely on that occasion. "They never happened; but if you want faith, I'll show you what a good Christian I am by believing them when I know they never happened." This was held to be the perfect triumph of faith, and the ice of the Ohio was immediately broken for me.

Well, Eboli's story was infinitely more probable than that of the loaves and fishes. I believed her; and surely, if I did, orders or no orders, I was acting cruelly enough, keeping her from her destination and subjecting her constantly to the insult of Jared's espionage and the menace of Miller's society.

"I will take you to the Island," I said after due deliberation, "if you will swear that your

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

story is true just as you have told it to me and that you are not in any way connected with the conspiracy.”

She laid her hand on Ancy Ann’s big Bible, which I indicated, then withdrew it as quickly as if it were burned.

“I thought you believed me.”

“’Tis a mere form, swearing, and only makes it more compatible with my duty to take you there. I do believe you.”

“In spite of the evidence Jared thinks he has against me?”

“For the matter of that, there is evidence enough against him and me. He only knows the facts, while I know you.”

There was silence. Then I adverted to the matter of the Bible.

“I am sworn myself, we Vigilants all are, not to pass any one unless on proof most positive that he is innocent of treason. I doubt my belief in you is scarce a positive proof and, unless you verify it, my own vow’s in danger.”

She faced me with a look of awe, almost terror. It was succeeded by an expression of abandon.

“What is the difference? It is only a form,” and she laid her hand on the Book.

“No, no,” I interrupted, in sudden doubt. “I will believe without it.”

“Why?” The glance was fearless; the question direct.



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Because — if it were a lie — if I had made you perjure your soul —"

"My soul! It is only a form. Do you think I am afraid of forms? I do solemnly swear by this Holy Book that the facts are just as I have told you and that I am in no wise connected with the conspiracy. There! When will we go to the Island?"

There was such defiance, such recklessness in her manner that I cried in distress:

"Was it true?"

"I have sworn it."

"Yes, I know. But tell me for my peace of mind, that it was true."

She hesitated again; then she laid her hand gently on mine.

"Ezra, it were wickeder to deceive you than to swear falsely, but — for your peace of mind, I promise you that it was true."

The sweet, soft voice, the touch of the hand, what further proof could a lover ask that she was made of all angelic qualities?

Then we talked of methods. It was finally agreed that she should first write a letter to Mrs. Blennerhassett, which I was to deliver, explaining matters and asking when she should come.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

### CHAPTER XII

**D**OWN by the spring at dusk I was raking together a bonfire of autumn leaves, when Eboli came with her letter.

"You shall read it, Ezra, and see its innocence."

There were only a few affectionate lines addressed to dear Margaret.

"It is truly innocent," I declared, "unless —"

The sight of the fire had brought a thought to my mind. Every bit of paper that he found, Jared held before a blaze to see if it bore any secret writing. It was mainly to show my own acumen that I now did the same. But Eboli snatched at her letter with unmistakable anger.

"Give it back. I have promised. I have sworn. If you doubt me yet, I will find a messenger to whom my word is not so worthless."

"Heaven forbid. It was an ugly trick; I only did it because Jared does, and meant no insult. See, I prove it. There is no cipher on your letter. I know there isn't. I do not even look to see," and folding the sheet into its wrappings, I bade her seal it and thrust it into my breast.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

In the silence that followed, she drew me down on a log beside the spring and ran off into some of her fancy talk, explaining that the spring wasn't a spring at all, but a fountain which had a part to play in the romance of Roland and Angelica—which you understand was she and I—and that here my cue came in to say I loved her.

"What's the use? I did say it once. Isn't that enough? Love's love to me and a matter of three words. It's like Jared could vary them drawing out as mighty a melody as Jakey Beam does from the E of his fiddle, but I'm no hand at plunking on one string. I'd need David's harp of a thousand to play even a passable tune."

"One note's better than no music. You never said it but once and repetitions have a melodic value. Pizzicato, Ezra, pizzicato, the which is an Italian orchestra direction meaning—give another twitch to that string of yours. We will vary it this time with a 'why.' Have you come to love me yet, like Antony, just because I am fair, the fairest in all the world? Out at Arden that first day, you wouldn't admit as much."

"No. I love you for your virtues."

"It is simpler, Ezra, to take me face-value. Say, because I am fair."

"You might be just as fair and yet be cruel and wicked and deceitful. Heaven help

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

us, you wouldn't want me to love you for such a reason. 'Tis your virtues I love, only your virtues and purity."

"You put it that way because your people were Puritans and it takes more than one generation to live down a New England ancestry. It's wrong, Ezra. You loved me that first instant before you took to making up virtues for me. Virtues—how do they concern a hand-clasp or a kiss? Wicked and cruel and deceitful, you would have loved me none the less that day; yes, and you would love me now though I were as full of wiles as Delilah. See, you tremble just to twist my hair between your fingers. What if I lied this afternoon? Would it matter? Why, you'd follow me down to hell and be as happy with me there as Paolo and Francesca. Look at me. Say—what do I need of virtues? I am beautiful. I am perfect. Good or bad—or *bad*—you loved me—love me, better than Thankful, better than any one."

The last words ended in a mocking, ringing chant. Her head was thrown back, her eyes stared into mine with an ecstasy of triumph as if since our first meeting she had been daring me to this and I at last had yielded.

"Because I can trust you," I stammered, still holding to my first position. "I have proved how far I trust you."

"Proved—that! You didn't look for ciphers on my letters because you knew in your soul

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

that you'd take it in any case. You have proved your love. Only such a splendid, simple thing as you, ever carries love so far. Look up to your mistress, worship her, believe her perfect, and if she should fall, share her sin like Adam and augment it, that out of the mire you may look up to her still."

Eboli was reading me by the light of her own desires and she was surely mistaken as to my motive in not examining her letter. I pushed her away while I bent my wits on her last fine-sounding proposition to search out just where its fallacy was hidden. It was lurking, I presently discovered, behind that matter of sharing her sins. Other interests than hers and mine were concerned, and a hankering for a pretty maid is no warrant for a man's delivering treasonous messages.

"It may be that I'd love you in any case," I said, for the touch of her hair was still on my fingers, "but that letter I would not take unless I knew it innocent. You are testing me. I love you well enough to assume that you are only testing me; but if you carry the test a hair's breadth farther, your letter goes to Jared instead of the Island."

At this, her expression darkened ever so slightly. I recalled somehow the significant hint of a shadow that rises, despite all self-control, to the face of a seasoned river gambler when he has lost more than he had a right to stake.



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"I was only testing you, Ezra, but—is that true?"

"As true as Christ."

The tension between us loosened when Jared came up. Eboli saw him first and withdrew to a more seemly distance, looking into the big gum of the fountain, which by this time had shrunk back to a spring again.

"Miller is in the house," Jared said without preface. "He wants to escort Miss Lucinda to prayer-meeting perhaps—or perhaps some whither for a walk. Does she take my advice and decline?"

"She does—she does not. It is immaterial. Advice serves purpose enough in the satisfaction it affords the giver."

"She must. Look at the way the game stands. I am for the United States; you for England, Burr, and Blennerhassett; and Miller for Wilkinson and Spain. I assume that you have heard of the load of gold."

"You are passing free with your assumptions, but no matter. It sounds like an interesting game. You have set us on the board, now jump us about a bit. Whose play is it and who are partners?"

"You and I for the nonce, though, faith, 'tis a three-hand cut-throat. The empire depends upon the co-operation of the English fleet with Wilkinson's army. You alone know the signals that will secure it. Your signal

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

code, verbal or written, is destined for Wilkinson; but you have no authority, especially in consideration of his probable treachery, to give it to him without explicit sealed orders from Burr."

But Eboli was already weary of so much complication and impatiently set aside the whole affair. "What has all this to do with my walking out with Mr. Miller?"

"Only this: Aaron Burr is far off, uncertain where, and you can't obtain an interview with Blennerhassett. Meanwhile Miller is bound to have your signals. Go with him beyond our protection and he will force them from you. Your diplomacy would be ill appreciated at home if it embroiled your country in a war for the benefit of Spain."

"He can scarce force from me signals that I don't know."

"He can try harsh methods, believing that you do know. Do you think chivalry counts with desperate men? Ah, Ezra, she hasn't our experience of the General."

"Desperate villains!—involved plottings! 'Tis so thrilling a melodrama that I wish I had a part in it, but I only do high tragedy. Take comfort though. I shall not go with him because Mr. Miller chooses to make love to me, and I am already betrothed to another—the bravest and the best," she went on in a soft undertone. "He wears my ribbon in his breast,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

the only token I ever gave a man. He knows me and can trust me, and some day I am going to marry him."

The cooing murmur disturbed for the moment even Jared's convictions regarding her, while it set my heart to thumping till I feared lest it break a rib. For in my wildest dreams, understand, I had never thought of marrying her. She always insisted that our betrothal was not a paltry pit-comedy leading to a wedding, but a classical thin-and-fine affair which must be capped by an artistic, tear-stained parting.

As she walked away, Jared stood looking after her.

"I haven't—have I?—no, I haven't been mistaken in her. But betrothed! That settles one point. You heard her, Ezra. To tell the truth, I've been a bit suspicious of her and you. She is bent on getting to the Island, her method obviously being to corrupt the guard. I have taken off patrol every man that showed a fancy for her, though, the deuce! she's been so free with her favors that she near used up all my Vigilants. I'd planned to oust you next, though you are hard to spare. But if she is betrothed—why, you will never make a fool of yourself for a woman that is betrothed."

Jared was quite triumphant as we returned to the house.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"She can't reach the Island, and she won't give Miller and Nolan her signals till she does. Meanwhile the conspiracy is blocked and there is hope for us."

Eboli was going to marry me. As I sat on the stoop that evening, that thought billowed back in all its vastness and submerged all others. Voices drifted down from the surface of it, Jared's, Ancy Ann's, and Thankful's, but I noted them not. When all the house but me had gone to bed, I still sat there alone, listening to the lullaby within me.

Our place was on the outer edge of Marietta where the town lots begin to swell into little farms. The woods were deep across the way from me, the sky was deep overhead and there seemed never a noise in all creation but the sound of crickets and katydids. It was a calm, sombre evening, such as I always loved, with no intruding moon bowling about turning a fine night into a faded imitation of day. A man, sitting under the big, black cap, can feel himself sprouting like a seed, and germinating thoughts inexpressible and feelings unthinkable. She was the burden of all mine.

When she herself presently flitted down to the stoop in search of me, I told her what a pleasure it was just to keep still and receptive and see what would come. Moreover, I did not pass by the fact that I had been wanting her thus close beside me so that we might keep

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

still, together, listening to the great silence, talking with finger pressures, and feeling the worthlessness of all other speech.

"There is a fine phantasy on love skulking behind that notion, too," I added, "if Jared were but here to nose it out. It escaped me just as I laid hold of it and left me like Potiphar's wife with a handful of outer wrappings. This thing of listening to silences was only the husk of it, you understand."

"I ought to have waited before coming down for it would be a joy to see you dig out the kernel. But—there is something I wanted to tell you. I couldn't sleep without. The night was so still and dark and horrible."

"It is a peart enough night to my mind and not the sort to set any one shuddering. A plague on it—'tis the selfsame night they had yesterday in England, just shoved along a peg onto us."

"The lights and music cow it down in London. But out here at the ends of the earth, man isn't master. So much space—such an awful stretch of space—makes one think that possibly there may be—perhaps—a Creator back of it."

"Marietta is nowhere near the ends of the earth," I objected. "Nor, indeed, does the earth have ends nowadays. This is a scholarly town and every one in it knows that the world is round. It's only ignorant boatmen that still



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

think it flat, with Madagascar and Tahiti perched on the outer edges like salt-cellars on a table mat to keep the corners from turning up. But round or flat, it has a Creator. Oh, certes, it has. I know for I take Him on faith as I do you. Not that it's any great difference, either, how we and the universe got made, so long as we are made. If we were still dust and water, as in Genesis, waiting to be mixed together, the question of whether there was a Creator on the premises would be of some importance."

"If you wouldn't interrupt—I said I had a confession to make. Irrelevancies have marred many confessions and shut off from grace the souls that might have made them. What I mean is, that the blankness, blackness—Ezra, if you found that your faith in me had been misplaced, that I had deceived you, played with you, that—that—that—" Her voice caught, and she ended with:

"You would think badly of me—very?"

Was it but a continuance of her tests of the afternoon? She was so serious that a dreadful doubt shot through me and I unconsciously flung back the hand that rested pleadingly on mine.

"Badly of you? Badly of God. I doubt I should grow back into an atheist and go living in a universe that nobody made—just for a sell on credulity. Is that the way of it? You are not going to tell me that that's the way of it?"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Eboli's softened mood passed with my words. She gave her cynical little laugh which I liked the least of anything about her. She was nervous and unstrung. She spoke rapidly and her voice rang in shrill gradations.

"I'm not going to tell you that. Oh, indeed, I'm not going to tell you that. The night was doloroso and I had a fancy for religion. One can be a fool. That's an observation aside from the subject. Its warrant in this connection is its universality and truth. A minim is an overdose of piety for a total abstainer. That's another. But I wouldn't tell you. Even if it were so, 'twould be a shame to tell you. What a fraud churchmen's maxims are! Confession good for the soul—but whose soul? Confession's a cowardly conscience-easer. A decent sinner—don't you think?—would carry his sins himself, even though they did drag him down to hell, rather than unload them on his friends. Oh, no, that's not pertinent either, but wise saws never come amiss. I'm everything you think me, Ezra. I'm the wonder of London, the only clean-hearted maid in the profession. I never cheated or deceived or told a lie—did you ever tell a lie?"

"Lord, what would be the use, when I couldn't do it so any one would believe it?"

"That's nice," she rattled on. "It must be dreadful to be believed in one and have to stir into its embers right along and keep it blazing.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

For myself, I never tried. Truth is my armor. Worldliness has no attraction for me. I repulsed the courtship of a prince. I—”

“But you said you had a confession to make.”

“’Tis only this, I want my letter back, and you needn’t take me to the Island.”

“There is treason in it then?”

“Treason? Why, man, if I were a conspirer, wouldn’t I let you carry it? But I’m too innocent for treasons. You’ve never heard of Beatrice?—Dante and Beatrice? She was a marvel—if she was all her lover thought her. I’m just like her.”

“What do you mean, and why do you want your letter back? If you would talk plain for once maybe I’d understand.”

“It is my calling. I’ve learned to think in blank verse. As for talk, there’s a swarm of Elizabethan metaphors inside me that buzz round every idea old enough to attract them.”

Then she reverted to the letter. After brushing off the pest of similes that really did light on every thought of hers till they nigh destroyed its shape, I made out that she wanted the letter because she was too generous to let me take the risk of delivering it, and, moreover, the matter was unimportant so long as she might stay with me—*might* she indeed continue to stay with me?

She asked the question so coquettishly and so wheedled me with her anxiety over my wel-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

fare that I lost sight of any oddity in her change of purpose about the letter. But there was a sparkling, unnatural excitement about her behavior none the less, and when I commented on it she insisted that the look of the sky had been keeping her awake.

"It's too peaceful a night to keep any one awake," I objected.

"Peaceful! — that it is — and there's so much of it that it gets on a body's nerves. La, what will become of us when we are sucked out into the immensity for good and all?"

"We will go to Heaven, most likely, up there."

"Up there?"

"The New Jerusalem. It's in the upper story just above the sky, taking the sky to be a sort of roof. You can get a glimpse of its gold pavements if you look overhead."

But Eboli rebelled at having the stars thus turned into holes in the ceiling. Indeed science and theology do mix like varnish and water; but I reconcile matters by thinking that if God did make the little yellow dots suns, he surely could have made them holes, and for the rest, I leave it to any one which they resemble most.

"Heaven's there," I insisted. "The good will reach it sometime, and the wicked —"

"Send them there too, Ezra. They'd be so wretched there — all unregenerate and vainly

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

longing to sin in among the peace and silence. 'Tis so exquisite a torture, mind you, God will never overlook it."

"What do you mean?"

"Nothing. I had a vision of one turned reckless, of a colossal selfishness that cried, 'I against the field! No quarter and no qualm. It's mine to plot and lie and cheat if I can profit by it. There is no God, no avenger, nothing of consequence in the universe but me.' It is really sublime, such selfishness as that, and altogether worth while. Shakespeare would weave it into some grand pentameters."

"And how did he come out?"

"He?"

"The reckless man you were supposing."

"I hadn't sexed him yet but we'll call him a man. Women are too good. Oh, sure, 'twas a man. But along came a peaceful night and a simpleton who had faith in him and—"

"Redeemed him," I interrupted, for I know how a moral tale should always end.

"Folks aren't redeemed so easily. He will go on, cheating and plotting and lying to the end. But the simpleton gave him a qualm and the peaceful night swallowed him, spoiling his sublimity and the pentameters he deserved of Shakespeare. His self-conceit has gone under; he has grown little and paltry, one pitiful crotchet off the general harmony, an A that knows it's made to be a key-note rasping de-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

fiantly into an E-flat tune, an atom banging against planets, a—”

“A fly caught in a dog’s mouth,” I added, trying to help her out with her comparisons of powerlessness. “Go on.”

“That is all. ’Tis a lame ending, but you wounded the hind foot of my fancy and it will have to go limping off the stage. I didn’t let you take my letter. Mark that. Remember it in the future years whenever you think me over. ’Tis one of my bunch of virtues that I did not let you take my letter.”

When she was gone, I remembered that never a word had I said about the matter of our marrying. Dear girl! She was an enigma in all of her talk and many of her actions; but either women are mainly that way, or it has been my lot to fall in with feminine freaks.

## CHAPTER XIII

**I**N THE next few days Eboli was very kind and tender to me though she studiously parried all my references to a marriage, nor did I greatly press the point.

“You’ll not really marry me,” I said one day. “You are too dainty for pioneering. The glitter and tinsel is bound to draw you back to London in the end.”



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Eboli reflected on this remark solemnly as if it were something of a revelation to her.

"Yet you think I love you?"

"You say so—sure, you must love me or you'd not let me pat your hand and stroke your hair, two things which a proper maid never permits otherwise. At least, so Ancy Ann told me long ago, in case I should ever want a test."

"I've played a hundred kinds of heroine but never one failed to set love above every splendor and even to die for it, when the dramatist had contracted for a tragedy. I wonder if you're right and that's the gage of me—that the glitter and tinsel would draw me back in the end, even if—if I loved you."

"I'm not much—not like your Othellos and such," I explained, she seemed so distressed by my reading of her. "A woman couldn't be expected to love me with thrills. You're a blossom of innocence and truth. Who could think differently when you fled so far and suffer such injustice to escape that miserable duke? But I am not mistaking you for a wild flower. They're an innocent lot, posies, all of them. A calla lily isn't to blame because it doesn't like the woods and sighs for its hothouse."

And I knew I was right. The London spirit clung to her. It was only in Ancy Ann's presence that she managed to keep it down and be sedately occupied with samplers and cross-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

stitches. To the rest of us she described Pall Mall and the glories of Vauxhall and Drury Lane. Aside from the King's sons, she had many acquaintances, it appeared, in the circles of court and cabinet. The Secretary of State was one of her closest friends. "Charlie" Fox, she called him with easy familiarity, and told of his many visits to her greenroom, and how he had not yet lived down his follies of thirty-odd years gone when he was the wildest rake in London. Regarding the conspiracy, she showed much curiosity, and, I fear me, encouraged Thankful's rapturous admiration of the mysterious man in camlet, for whom all Marietta was searching.

That same man in camlet had become almost a myth in our parts, no one having yet seen him but Jared and Thankful, when of a sudden word was received of him in a new connection.

Jared and I had ridden out one day in a desperate attempt to get some clew to the whereabouts of the Spanish gold; for Marietta was restive at the loss of it and criticism was free as to Jared's mismanagement. Miller, in his character of United States officer, threatened publicly to take the matter out of Jared's hands if some result did not speedily come of our searchings.

I was still, I am ashamed to say, uncertain of Miller's motives. He acted his loyalty so

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

well that I gave him the doubt and considered him honest in his distrust of us and his belief in Wilkinson. He was rather open too in his persecution of Eboli, as fell in with the part he was assuming. He certainly thought that she had a signal code which, from his actions, he was bound to take from her by fair means or foul. I considered that he might want it disinterestedly only to hobble Burr, and that, if he were willing to use violent methods, it was simply because he was a stern patriot of the Roman school who would not allow pleasing gallantries and a lady's welfare to stand in the way of his country's safety. Indeed he admitted as much to me. When I taxed him with his machinations concerning Eboli, he smiled cynically, mentioned Mary Ann, and advised me, if I wished to preserve my reputation as an honest American, to give over my treasonous protection of English emissaries.

As we were riding along that morning, Jared himself unconsciously strengthened this opinion of mine relative to Miller.

"We are being crowded into a tight corner, Ezra, and unless we have some results to show pretty shortly, the gold, the 'enclosed paper,' or something, it's over and out as far as we're concerned. If we had Eboli's signal code now — we ought in the interests of the United States to have it, — and 'twould be so easy to take it from her. God, were I only built on the Miller

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

plan! But I can't make war on women. Not to save myself or my country or all the future generations, I couldn't put thumbscrews on a woman. Tiffin chose the wrong man. I'm too weak and squeamish in my stomach for a successful general."

Well, it was a hard ride and a fruitless one that we had that day, and we were dispirited enough as we were returning to Marietta. There was a roadhouse a little west of town, the "Violet in the Dell," it was called, and a rougher more unsavory place scarce existed along the entire river. It was known as a haunt of pirates and thieves whither decent men seldom repaired, and many curdling tales were afloat of grewsome doings in its cellar. However, we drew rein there now; for 'tis against my principles to pass any place where a glass of liquor, however vile, is to be had, I holding that even as half a loaf is better than none, so poor whisky is vastly preferable to no whisky at all. The landlord bowed Jared in at the door, while I loitered behind a moment arranging my stirrups. An exceedingly unpleasant man was he, even worse than the drink he served—a fat, cowardly, hypocritical toady at best, the cruelty and fathomless cunning for which he was noted showing in his glassy, little eyes. When thinking of his reputation and looking at himself, I had always an insane desire to stick my knife into him and see

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

whether, in dying, he would wriggle like an eel or squeal like a pig.

As I turned to follow Jared, I thought I caught sight at a side window of Miller's face. It was but an instant's glimpse and I immediately put it out of my mind. It might not have been Miller at all, and in any case, he had as much right there as ourselves.

I found Jared in the barroom, grown hilarious of a sudden, questioning a trapper, while all the followers of the tavern stood in an eager circle round him. It seemed that trace at last was got of the load of gold. The trapper before us stated that his children had taken refuge from a shower the night before in the lee of a deserted cabin some ten miles west of town. While there, two men entered, one of them having a glossy, green cloak, which he took from a bundle and threw over his shoulders while he signed some papers. Then a cart with sacks in it drove up and was given over to the man in the cloak.

On our way home, we stopped at the warehouse while Jared repeated the story to O'Mallory.

"This thing occurred about five o'clock last evening. At five o'clock last evening, I was guarding the Island," Jared concluded, triumphantly feeling that his innocence of any connection with the cloak was now established.

"Eh? And so ye and yer cloak were housing the gold at the very hour when ye were

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

pretending to be on pathrol duty. Oh, ye knowing wan !”

“Good Lord!” exclaimed Jared, “will I never make you understand? The man is Philip Nolan. A Spanish agent brings the money up here and at the cabin delivers it to him as Wilkinson’s representative; the cloak being the means of identification. Thomas Power was the Spanish envoy in the old days, perhaps yet. Now here is the point. That gold is bound without doubt for this warehouse. Wilkinson expects that you, thinking it corn, will keep it safe till trace of it is lost by the United States and he dares himself receive and use it.”

“Sure, the scoundhrel—but we’ll show him, ye and me. We will spend it for him, every cent. When he asks for his cart-load of corn, *corn*, bedad—just corn, he shall have.”

“The United States is to have it,” corrected Jared, like a schoolmaster drilling an extra stupid child. “The Vigilants are to watch the warehouse and the road. We will surround the cart in short order and capture it—Nolan, cloak, Spanish gold, and all. Tiffin will have to believe in Wilkinson’s treachery then.”

“Tiffin—why, man, Tiffin will confiscate it.”

“Of course he will and if you are wise you will help to give him a chance. The Vigilants suspect you—a mob is a fierce thing—”

“But listen, darlint. A cart-load of gold—a great counthry like Spain rich enough to pay



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

a cart-load of gold, while little Ireland—I was only thinking, if we could save it, what a help-out it would be on Ireland's taxes."

Well, Jared argued with him confuting and confounding him. We had come to like O'Mallory, and were anxious to have him as little implicated as possible when the final crash came; not being an American, his conspiring seemed to have less turpitude. Growing frightened by Jared's representations, he promised at length to help in the hue and cry after the corn. But the obstinate fellow, dislodged at all other points, retreated to Jared's certain identity with the man in camlet. It was his last ditch and he stayed in it with a doggedness worthy a member of the Old Guard.

"The guns and such guilty things are all on the Island, where yer pathrol will let us neither to nor fro. Oh, I'll do me proud, bidding the Vigilants into the warehouse here and showing them my bins. I'll help to capture the gold too, since ye say I must; but ye will not let them have the cloak, will ye now? We can never have our empire without that cloak."

"The gold, the cloak, and Nolan—all."

But the last word, to O'Mallory's mind, turned the whole affair back to a jest.

"Arrah, now I know ye are making fun. Poor, dead Nolan! If they can catch him, I'll warrant they are welcome to Nolan."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"So much for Phil Nolan, the hero of Thankful's romance," said Jared on the way home. "'A short love and a merry one,' is a passing fair motto and, faith, it is short enough this one of hers will be if the Vigilants do their work well."

Leaving Jared at his quarters, I repaired alone to the *Sentinel* office. There was a letter lying on my desk where I could not fail to see it, a very feminine looking letter addressed to me.

"Dear Ezra," it read. "Last night a man in a camlet cloak threw into my room a missive purporting to come from Mrs. Blennerhassett. It said she had contrived a way for me to visit her and bade me repair to the rendezvous she named to-night, whither she would send a friend of hers to fetch me. For friendship's sake and my own sore loneliness, I would not disappoint her; yet I am mindful of your warnings. If all does not seem as it should be, I will go no farther than the rendezvous. Will you follow me there for my protection, in case the letter is a decoy or there is anything amiss? The hour is eight; the place is the Violet in the Dell!"

Of all evil places, the Violet in the Dell! Eight—it was eight already. In a frantic anxiety, I recalled the reputation of the roadhouse and Miller's face at the window; I knew now it was Miller I had seen. Her message

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

could not have come from Mrs. Blennerhassett. It was an impossibility with the guard we kept for Nolan or any other to take her to the Island. The only explanation was that she had been decoyed, lured away to a lonely, wicked spot where she would be at the mercy of desperate men.

I resaddled my horse and posted off eastward again. As I passed his inn, I called to Jared, gave him the letter and told him my fears, bidding him get aid if he could and come, but be quick, be quick! follow me swiftly even though he follow me alone! Then I dashed on.

## CHAPTER XIV

THE Violet's lights were out and the hostelry wore a pretense of innocent early slumber. When at length I knocked up the slimy landlord, he came to the door barefooted and candle in hand and rubbing his eyes drowsily in an ostentatious way that gave the worst color to my suspicions. He declared that no lady had been there that day. He insisted further that Miller had not been there that day, nor Nolan, nor any one but Jared and me and the trapper who had told us of the gold. By sundry fearsome oaths and

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

threats, I induced him to recall Miller, but he refused, even at a pistol's point to remember anything of a lady. Snatching his candle from him, I strode through his apartments, examining them for myself.

In the side room where I had caught the glimpse of Miller, I found a clew. A piece of ribbon held by a pin was fastened to the window-sill. By it, these words had been written with a pencil on the wood:

"If young Orlando will come at once to Arden Forest, he may yet be in time to rescue a lady out of the dire peril into which she has been betrayed."

Leaving the ribbon as a possible clew to Jared, I returned to the hall and the landlord.

"Forget the lady if you choose," I said, "but remember this. When Jared Dalrymple comes, you are to tell him that she is on Sas-safras Hill, that I have gone to her assistance, and he is to follow me instanter with all the help he can muster. Will you forget that, or shall I carve it on your breast for the betterance of your memory?"

He indicated that the words would need no carving and I hurried on and away. As I made for the woods I heard him give a shrill whistle, which I rightly guessed was a signal to others to watch for and waylay me. It was a foolhardy move, venturing into the underbrush alone and against no knowing how many

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

adversaries. Of a sudden and without a premonitory footfall of warning, some one leaped from behind a tree which I had just passed and dealt me a crashing blow on the back of the head. Fortunately mine is a thick, stout skull; wherefore it happens that my story does not end here, albeit it lapses for two or three hours which but for that stroke would have been nobly exciting ones.

When I recovered my senses, I was alone, bound to a log, my hands tied behind me. Evidently the landlord had not delivered my message else Jared would already have come to my relief. The situation was bad, but not hopeless. The fact that my pockets were turned inside out gave me courage for my assailants would scarcely have neglected to return at once to the tavern for a carouse on their plunder, and I thanked Heaven I had carried money enough to make drunk a goodly number of them. There was probably no one in the forest besides myself but Eboli and Miller. If I could once get loose, there might yet be time.

By dint of much twisting and straining I managed to free myself in a shorter time than I had hoped. With long strides I came to Sas-safras Hill. A lantern, dangling from a tree, guided me to the spot I sought. Eboli sat beneath it, sober and downcast, listening to Miller's words.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"You have had time to come to reason. Will you give me your signal code? You admit that you are the English emissary."

I was crouched ready for a spring on him when she took away my courage, purpose, all my manly spirit by her answer.

"I have never denied to you that I was in the conspiracy since I learned that you were "

"We will pass up that point," said Miller, "I still deny it, though 'tis immaterial."

Meanwhile my hands had fallen by my sides and I went on listening in a daze.

"Where is Ezra?" she asked.

"You left him word in a pinch to come to your assistance? I thought you would. There's an outpost yonder at the tavern which no one passes to-night with impunity. What do you say?"

"I say—let us make terms. I have the signal code. It's intended for General Wilkinson and I have no purpose to keep it from him. But play me fair. Give me in return the Burr warrant and the General's lists of the posts he will surrender."

"Wilkinson's lists are not wholly impossible but I can't give you the Burr order. It is at the Island and there is no time to locate him and get another."

"Take me to the Island then. Show me Blennerhassett."

"I could as easy show you Julius Cæsar.



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

You played Ezra rather coolly, getting him to let you into his house. I thought you would work on him to take you to the Island. That was your proper play. It is odd that Mary Ann, the long range calculator, overlooked it. Then you might have had the Burr order and gone on peaceably with your part in the conspiracy. With all the will in the world, I couldn't give you that order."

"Then I can't give you the signal code."

"You can."

"Do you mean to murder me?" she demanded, as he gripped her wrist.

"No, madam. Murder's not my forte. It's a dirty trick and generally leaves consequences. Besides it isn't necessary. You won't resist. There is no stoicism in you. Fox counted on your head, but he overlooked your nerves. You are as shrewd as Lucifer—and as soft as a caterpillar."

"I can't give you the signal code," she repeated.

"You can." He whipped out a knife and pointed it against her. "You can. Will you? Oh, I'll not murder you; only stab slow and easy. Long before it reaches your heart you will surrender that code."

The sight of steel startled me out of my daze. I had been robbed of my weapons along with my money but I flew at Miller empty handed, caught him round the ribs, and for a

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

space we wrestled and writhed silently among the trees.

For me, there was no particular heart in the battle. I fought like an automaton, like a man who has come to fight and sees a quarrel set taskwise before him. It would not have vexed me in the least that moment if I had been crowded under and killed. Had not the habit of self-defense abode with me, I should have courted such an ending. As it was, the contest could have but one issue. I was physical champion of the riverside. Unarmed and dizzy with my sore pate, I was yet more than a match for Miller.

When I had wrested his knife from him, he said:

"I cry you quarter, Mr. Wilbur. Wrestling is not my game, and 'tis no shame for a man to fail where he makes no pretenses. I yield the lady to her defender."

I let him rise. I hardly heard his mocking, courteous words of farewell. I scarcely saw him leave us. Presently I turned and faced her.

"And so, madam, this is you. And I loved you and made your quarrels mine and nigh got myself killed—for you."

"Well?" she said defiantly.

"I could read innocence in your eyes and your lips curved up into a perch for heavenly truth to roost on."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

"Well?"

"'Twas the glint of your hair blinded me. And you swore—"

"I was a liar. Well?"

"Good heavens, are you defending your course?"

"Well, suppose I am. Guilty's a plea not admissible in law for a capital offense. But go on; finish it out. Dig into me like God at the Judgment Day. I was a liar last."

"You weren't. Quit your 'wells' and make me up another story—can't you? to prove you haven't been deceiving me?"

"I might say that I had as good a right to serve my country as you have to serve yours."

"True," I answered, catching at the chance to make excuses for her. "England's not to blame for wanting to split us into halves, nor you for standing up for England."

"It is false," she contradicted. "Patriotism had nothing to do with it. They offered me a coronet, that is marriage with a lord who admired me but had an obstinate family. There! That is how I look with the paint rubbed off. Ugly—ugh! I hurt your eyes—and you'd like to turn savage and throttle me. Well, I have done you a cruel wrong, not being what you wanted me. 'Tis the only wrong a man never forgives a woman."

You see, she thought me angry, and her first hard behavior was due to an instinctive

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

human attempt to ward off blame. I daresay my cue was for anger and that her Shakespeare would have lashed me into a wondrous froth. But I was only grieved, grieved down to the very marrow of my soul, and so bitterly that I was like a dying man whose desperate sickness has wasted all hot emotions out of him.

"And you don't love me," I wailed. "You never loved me. There are things that can be."

I sank on a log. My head dropped on my arms. I must have looked such a limp rag of a man that she softened to me. At all events, she did soften to me. Her hand reached out through the darkness and just touched mine.

"I never loved you. What can I say? Forgive me? That's a weak plea. We'll throw that to the dogs. I'd love you yet, now, this moment—oh, but I can't love any mortal thing aright. I can't sacrifice. I can't immolate myself. I can't live in Marietta and get old and hard handed serving you. Nor would you want me, now you've had a look. Had you noticed that it's one of your moonless nights which you told me showed up the truth of things? Faith it is dark enough for owls and blind men like you to see."

"Dark nights—dark worlds and skies and suns. Oh, 'tis a void, full of nothing—all of it—everything. But the matter, miss, is sombre and past a jest."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Poor Ezra! Poor me, rather, who means a plaint and finds it turning out a joke. Dirges that ring gay are sickening, aren't they? Like a hag with curls. What I mean is I—I never loved you."

"You have told me that already."

"Ah, but we'd best dwell on it. It will cure you and send you back heart-whole to Thankful—that and the fact that I'm a liar, a tawdry, washed-out, cast-off bit of stage tinsel seen by daylight. It's better this way. You won't keep miserable thinking of me through the years after I'm back in England. It's finish and quits to-night, and you will hate me properly by morning. Watch my antics once in this conspiracy. See how bad I am. Oh, 'twill rend and tear, I daresay, your love for me, but if you yank it hard enough you'll get it out. Think of my coronet—I'm going to have a coronet and a husband, and be monstrous happy. Why not? I never loved you. Don't forget that—I never loved you, Ezra."

There was silence for a time; then with the cold formality of a stranger, I recalled her to our present situation and we walked back together to the tavern. The Violet was lighted now and astir. Some Vigilants were in the hall. Eboli refused to enter, but stood shivering outside, looking now at the Violet's interior, now at Arden Forest in the distance.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

I found Jared in the side room by the window-sill.

"Been reconnoitring? So have I," he added, pointing to the message Eboli had scribbled on the board with the proud air of one showing a great discovery. "It's a new cipher, I should say, but it must refer to her. Arden Forest—there is no Arden Forest in this section and no Orlando either. Obviously, therefore, the letters can be rearranged into something else. 'Tis the knottiest cryptogram yet. I've been working at it these three hours; but there's something back of that 'Arden Forest,' and when I dig it up, we will have a clew to her whereabouts."

I laughed boisterously and mirthlessly.

"She is outside now. Why didn't you come to Sassafras Hill?"

Jared's relief did not detract from his interest in the legend on the window-sill. He carefully copied it off, promising to decipher it at his leisure in town. I left him still rearranging the letters of Orlando and Arden Forest while I went off to visit vengeance on the treacherous landlord.

"You forgot my message. I will teach you to remember in future."

I seized him in my arms and rocked him to and fro, giving him such a shaking as a cur administers to a rat. His face turned ashy as if at close range he beheld the day of doom. Jared swiftly interposed.





Then through the smoke, I heard the landlord's voice calling  
Eboli.



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Hands off, Ezra. However he may deserve it, it is not permissible to kill the man."

I dropped him with a laugh at his fright, having gone as far as I intended.

"Unfortunately, no. But the next time he plays his treacheries on me he will die so surely as I survive to be his executioner."

Threats, in our locality, were considered a cheap way of gratifying a man's self-conceit. They didn't mean overmuch, at least nowhere near their apparent meaning. You see, hyperbole is the one primitive figure of speech. We always looked for it; and as all recitals were subjected to a uniform discount, he was the biggest man who made the biggest talk. Boasts and brags emanated from barrooms till a simple statement, accurately expressed, of one's actual intentions would have sounded so insignificant as to provoke laughter rather than awe. But my great size or the landlord's own terror so impressed him that he took my words as earnestly as a passage out of Holy Writ.

"I wish you hadn't said that," Jared remarked, when he drew me away. "It is as impolitic as capital punishment for burglary. You have set a price on your own head, and another time he offends you he will take care that you don't survive. It's growing late. Go get your princess and take her back to home and safety."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

I found Eboli still gazing wistfully toward the woods.

"Good-bye," she whispered softly as she turned from it to me.

"Good-bye? Jared said I was to fetch you to Marietta."

"I meant, good-bye to Arden. It has been a pleasant sojourn there, and sometimes, just for moments, I forgot that there was a world I cared about. One can be such a fool in Arden."

Her laugh was cold and mocking, but there was something back of this half cynical, half sentimental farewell to me and to the forest that rang in my ears for many a day and saved me from hating her.

## CHAPTER XV

THE next morning I rose with an aching head and a heavy heart. Not having the courage to meet Eboli, I avoided the family breakfast and piecing hastily from the cupboard in defiance of Ancy Ann's regulations, I set forth hoping to forget my troubles in the general hullabaloo after the gold. Nolan, his cloak, and his cart, were the only subjects of interest that day in all Wash-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

ington County. A detachment of Vigilants had gone by a circuitous route to a point below the cabin where the load of sacks had been delivered to Nolan. Other squads of men dispersed through the woods and along the river bank making ready to close in from all sides. If nothing went wrong, by night the money would be in the possession of the United States authorities, and Wilkinson hopelessly convicted of treachery.

"I have seen O'Mallory again," Jared said to me late in the day. "This pretended seed corn was to be stored, as you know, for Daniel Clark, he ostensibly intending to use it in planting his share of the Texas lands. Well, O'Mallory has been telling me more. It was a choice variety, this corn—supposed to be raised somewhere in Illinois and it seems that Wilkinson himself bought it up and sent it here, presumably in Clark's behalf, to be kept by O'Mallory till Wilkinson should take it again and ship it South. There are letters from Wilkinson to prove all this—not cipher ones for it is apparently an open deal. He has it magnificently identified by the weave of the sacks and the Daniel Clark tags so that when he comes to claim it there will be no mistake; it is valuable, you see. We may lose Phil Nolan. He will probably abandon his cart when the scratch comes but the gold is too cumbersome to escape. That will vindicate us.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

It will prove Wilkinson's complicity beyond peradventure."

Then he explained at length his plans for the night's work, recounting the duties assigned to the different men.

"I am sorry not to give you a share," he concluded, when I complained of being omitted, "but it puzzled me to know what disposition to make of Miller. We can't have him at large, helping Nolan. So I have ordered him and you to stay in the *Sentinel* office for you are the only man I dare trust to watch him."

The office being in the extreme east of town, I had no mind to be buried there away from the hunt. So I argued that however disposed, Miller would scarce be able to do any mischief when all was so excellently arranged.

"Probably not, but we take no risks. Obey orders; stay in the office, and whatever you do, don't let him for a moment out of your sight."

Miller, when the command was given him, consented to remain in the office with a sweet tempered willingness which convinced me more than ever of his innocence and vastly disturbed Jared.

"Could he have wished to stay there?" Jared mused. "Can he be contriving anything? There is no opportunity, positively none, for him to work a mischief if you keep him strictly under your eyes and inside the *Sentinel* door."



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

That night, all Marietta was on the streets thrilling with excitement and expectation. The crowd and turmoil was in the western part of town. About the *Sentinel* office everything was quiet. Miller and I looking out, fascinated by the sound of distant shoutings, saw only trees and shadows and the wagon road with never a passer by.

As we sat there in the silence Miller said:

"Mr. Wilbur, I believe you to be like myself, an honest citizen, albeit when I was on the point of obtaining a signal code essential to the safety of the Union, you stepped in and prevented me. Do you realize that I was but acting as a United States officer should act in such a desperate national crisis?"

"You may have been. Sure, even Jared thought it advisable to secure that code."

"Your attack on me places your own loyalty in a bad glimmer. However, I overlook much. You were scarce *compos mentis* last night. I fancy you received some harder knocks than you gave me—for you heard the conversation that preceded our encounter, didn't you?"

"A snatch of it," I answered with a swaggering assumption of carelessness.

"Then you admit at last that you were mistaken about her innocence?"

"She is the English emissary, if that's your meaning. I know it—knew it long ago," for

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

I was determined to preserve my bravado before Miller and conceal from him how thoroughly she had hoodwinked me.

"Since you know it, you will scarce turn sword-swallower again at her bidding. Stand away from her defense and leave her to me. You do not love her to-night as well as you did last eve."

"I don't?" I demanded bristling—his voice was so triumphant.

"Hardly, unless you are setting up for a simpleton. She took a very cool advantage of you, which a man of spirit is bound to resent. You can't love her now."

All that night I had been saying the same words to myself, saying them conscientiously, even while every nerve in me ached and throbbed. But from Miller, they fired me into an obstinate frenzy.

"I will love her, if I choose. By the Almighty, I will! No man shall chase me out of love with a jeer at my folly."

"Ah, you are forgiving Miss Lucinda, thinking that she reciprocates your passion. But she doesn't really love you as much as she imagines. You awake a sort of conscience in her and she fancies that she fancies you—because you are so good."

In the code of those days it was something of an insult to call a man good—a sneaking insult at that. which one couldn't very well

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

resent yet which was galling to accept. Besides in my own opinion I was not especially good. When minded, I could brawl and carouse with the best respected rowdy on the river, and there was a string of carefully garnered oaths and rough talk on my tongue which would shame any boatman. Truly, it was most contemptible of Miller to place Eboli's possible affection for me on the basis of my goodness.

While I was pondering the matter, he spoke of the load of gold and our plans for its capture.

"As I said, Mr. Wilbur, I believe you a loyal citizen, acting in the interests of the United States. But about Mr. Dalrymple—"

His brows were knit. Evidently he was uncertain what to believe about Jared; nor, colonel or no colonel, was I going to tell him. Any man stupid or wicked enough to misread Jared, is not worth passing words with.

"About Mr. Dalrymple," he repeated. "Why should he withdraw every one from this end of Marietta? Is it a blunder, or does he intentionally let the money slip by him?"

His face showed such an excellent counterfeit of perplexity that I allowed myself to be drawn into argument with him, though rather curtly.

"It is some ten miles from Marietta to the cabin. Every available man is needed without wasting any here. The sentries are none too

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

close together now—though close enough, so that Phil Nolan must needs be a ghost indeed to slip his cart past them.”

“A cart full of money will bribe many a person. It might make a detour to the north and get east of us sooner than the Vigilants suspect.”

“A cart can not go through underbrush, and there are pickets to the north. Reub Hannigan and John Sampson watch there to-night.”

“John Sampson and Reub Hannigan loaded their goods on a raft to-day and left town—bought off, I’ll swear.”

Indeed they were a ragamuffin pair of trappers, unfit like many of the Vigilants for responsible posts; but when so many men were required we could ill afford to be dainty in choosing them.

“Why didn’t you tell Jared of this?” I demanded.

“I have not seen him since I knew it—and, besides, how can I say but that he is the very one who bribed them?”

He took up his musket and examined its barrel. “It is my opinion that the cart has taken the North road and may be, even now, not far from this office. I propose to turn highwayman, challenge it, if it passes, and hold it here till morning or till assistance comes.”

“Or better,” I suggested, “drive it back to the warehouse where Jared is awaiting it.”

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"An officer should be the last to disobey orders. Ours were to stay in or near this printing office—and in or near it do I stay. But the cart is a matter upon which our captain, perhaps of intention, was not explicit. I conceive it my duty therefore to act on my own judgment."

"But you are in Wilkinson's service," I stammered.

"In the Federal service, rather, Mr. Wilbur. I believe the General is innocent of any connection with this gold. You probably think your friend, Jared Dalrymple, equally innocent. We both agree the gold must be captured. Perhaps then, since Mr. Dalrymple seems to have chained you to me, you will lend your aid—unless you have a fancy for shelter when bullets are on the wing."

My courage was so well known about Marietta, that I took Miller's last words as an over obvious goad to probe me into this adventure. But anxiety about the gold had taken away my few normal wits. Jared had stated that its capture would clear us. Therefore, no matter what trickery Miller was planning—were he indeed planning any—if the gold had escaped the Vigilants and was passing that way, I, Ezra Wilbur, must capture and hold it.

I took up my musket and the two of us stood facing each other. Miller bore my close scrutiny without the turn of an eyelash. No

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

roguery, no malice, no craftiness showed in his face. Just a proud, brave officer he looked, such as any man might be glad to serve under. I led the way outside with a gesture of satisfaction.

"You should be satisfied," he said with a shrug. "If I meant to let the cart get away, I would not have warned you of its coming."

I had a few acres of ground on the edge of Marietta well improved for those times, with an orchard and quite a clearing for corn, and dotted over with buildings. The house and *Sentinel* office were nearest town; then stable, granary, store-house, and milk-house followed, Indian file, and flanked the river road which ran past the place on through Marietta to Bel-pre, curving with the curves of the Ohio.

A few rods east of the office, the North road, whence Miller expected the cart, crossed it and led down to a rough wharf, seldom used now as the warehouse drew traffic to the west of us. Miller took up his post near the granary to one side of the crossing and bade me stay in the stable on the other side.

He was a brilliant officer in his comprehension of the field and its vantage points. Whatever his duplicity, I still consider him a brilliant officer; and dearly would I love to fight a battle under him. I, who must ever have another's head to do my thinking, rejoiced at his exposition of our method of attack,



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

interlarded with appetizing military terms; and placed myself unreservedly at his command. We were, as I recollect, to consider stable and granary as bastions for a time, till the cart appeared. He was perfectly confident that it would appear; and so I grew also, though I hardly knew on what grounds. Then we were to dash forth, down the escarpment and through the fosse—there was a small ditch with a passing steep bank by the roadside—then make an escalade upon the cart and dislodge its driver. At least, it was some such way. To one hazy in the mathematics of fighting, you will admit it had a glorious sound.

From my post Miller was invisible, and, waiting there in the darkness and silence, it presently occurred to me to wonder if he had so arranged our positions purposely. Jared's warnings returned to my mind. Not to let him out of my sight a moment—and here I had droned away nigh an hour with never a glimpse of him; and the cart, for aught I knew, just beyond the bend in the road.

First, I peered out from my bastion; then, overcoming a soldier's natural reluctance to mutiny, I crept forth and over to the granary.

Miller was nowhere to be seen. I crossed escarpment and fosse with one little leap, and, keeping in the shadows, proceeded noiselessly up the North road. There was a copse at the juncture of the two roads, and in it I could

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

hear the sound of low-pitched voices. I drew nearer very stealthily. Miller was saying:

"Not yet. Give them time to capture the other. Wait where you are an hour or so, and then come on."

Another voice murmured something—I lost the words—and Miller answered:

"Oh, Ezra? I bade him stay in the stable and there he will stay till daylight, or I call him forth."

What did it mean? What could it mean? "Get the other—wait an hour or so." Miller was tricking me. I thought of rushing into the copse, but it might conceal any number of men, and, were I slain, who would there be to capture the cart? No, the thing for me to do, was to warn Jared immediately and get help. As for leaving Miller, I had just heard him say that nothing was to happen for an hour or so.

I slipped away and made full tilt for the west town. There was a crowd around the warehouse. Word had just been brought that the cart full of sacks had been located not a half mile west of Marietta. Well, I breathed easier. The cart was what we wanted. That captured, Miller, whatever he was contriving, had little power to harm us. Besides, I counted on that hour or so.

The excitement got into my head. I joined the hunt. Our cordon drew closer and closer around the cart, a great motley mob of us, till

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

finally we had it. It was driven by an old negro. He said a gentleman out at the cabin had given him a dollar to take it to the warehouse. Some-one ordered him to drive on. And so we brought him in.

Jared was on the warehouse steps with a company of the town's notables, General Putnam, Ephraim Cutler, Return Jonathan Meigs, and other prominent men serving as committee of investigation. He now showed this committee Wilkinson's letters to O'Mallory, asking them to examine the capture.

The corn was unloaded. General Putnam presently stated that the weave of the sacks and the straps they were tied with tallied with the description in the letters, and that the committee found them, whatever their contents, to have been sent to Marietta by General Wilkinson.

It was a thrilling moment, and glad I was not to be cooped in my bastion waiting for Miller's signal. The torches flamed. The faces of the venerable patriots grew stern as they undid the fastenings, fearing, yet expecting to find therein proof of the General's treachery. Then out of the first sack, Ephraim Cutler drew an ear of corn—another—another.

"The gold is deeper; empty them."

Eager hands siezed hold and carried them to a bin. Corn and yet corn rolled out, but never a coin—never a gleam of gold. Jared's

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

face paled by the torchlight. What did it mean?

Then Ephraim Cutler was speaking:

"This only proves what every man will be glad to know, and Jared Dalrymple no doubt as glad as any, that General Wilkinson is faithful to his command, innocently sending corn where he said he would send corn. This is not the load that came from Mexico. That is indisputably gold and has some part to play in this suspected conspiracy."

"It must have gotten past us while we hunted this. Where are Reub Hannigan and John Sampson, who guarded the North road?"

Where indeed? A medley of cries brought out the fact of their departure. I tried to elbow my way to Jared but the throng was firm. I shouted but, in the din, no one heeded. Ephraim Cutler was saying:

"A vote of thanks for Jared Dalrymple, who has worked and will work zealously against all odds, even with his own men betraying him."

This set them to hurrahing for Jared till I despaired of ever getting a rational hearing. I set my teeth and hurried home, vowing to explore that copse and capture single handed whoever was in it.

When I reached my granary—behold, a cart was drawn up in front of it, a cart with some twenty sacks, almost the exact duplicate

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

of the one I had just seen taken. Its driver with his slouched hat pulled low, I made no doubt was Philip Nolan.

Miller himself was at the bridle. My only thought was that he meant to let it pass and escape us. Covering each of the two with a pistol, I ordered them to halt—though they were already halted—and bade Nolan dismount and both give up their arms, which they did with a docility that surprised me.

"Why are you threatening me?" Miller said. "I told you the cart would pass this way, whereupon you promptly deserted leaving me to take it alone. You owe apologies. Secure this man, and help me carry the sacks into the granary for safe keeping."

"Carry the sacks into the granary yourselves while I keep watch on you," I insisted, and the two obeyed so readily that I set them down for cowards.

When the sacks were safely housed, I followed Miller and Nolan into the granary, mightily proud of my prowess. Even the camlet cloak I had got, it being loaded up along with the sacks.

I opened one of them to see if these, too, contained only corn. Daniel Clark's name was on the strap, just as on the others—and inside, under a layer of corn, was gold uncounted.

There we sat long, none of us speaking; I never letting go my two pistols, they contented

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

enough, for all I could see. After a time the gallop of a horse was heard, and Jared himself came up.

"The gold escaped us, Ezra," he called as he dismounted, seeing only me through the door, "but not for long. Carts travel slowly. The Vigilants have cut through to the east. We are sure to have it yet. Wilkinson sent a second load to divert us. Heavens! What is this?"

For he had just stepped inside.

## CHAPTER XVI

"**A**T YOUR orders," said Nolan rising. "This gentleman has done you the service of taking me prisoner."

Proudly I corroborated his statement, relating the whole adventure to Jared, who stood looking nervously from Miller to Nolan, from the camlet cloak to the gold.

"Ezra, Ezra," he said, when I had finished. "There is only one man in the state a bigger dolt than Blennerhassett and that man is yourself. You bring them here, deliberately here, to our home, when you might so easily have made them drive back to the committee of investigation at the warehouse."



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

This reception hurt me, and I said rather sulkily:

"If you do not want my prisoner then, he is free."

"Ah, but I decline to be set free," answered Nolan coolly. "You have captured me—dispose of me. No man can play fast and loose with a prisoner in such a fashion."

"You see," commented Jared.

"Dispose of you! I shall dispose of you by turning you and your gold over to the Vigilants."

"Indeed, were I you, I would ask Mr. Dalrymple's advice." I hated Nolan for the mocking ring in his voice, and turned appealingly toward Jared, all my sulkiness gone.

"Leave it to me, Ezzy boy," and there was a wonderful comfort in his touch as he gripped my arm. "I was a bit taken back, I own, but—it is a sparkling, frothy situation. On reflection, I find my spirits rising to it. You planned most carefully to get your gold quartered on us, I suppose."

"Rather," said Nolan, "bribed a couple of your guards and got through into the thicket yonder. There I waited till the time was ripe to step forth and be captured by this valiant aid of yours."

"Jared," I interposed, "what is to hinder us sending now for General Putnam and the others?"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Send if you choose," Frank Miller answered. "What is to hinder my saying when they come, 'Citizens of Marietta, it is I who have summoned you. Behold, I have found the camlet cloak and the Spanish gold you search for hidden away here in the home of your leader. He had also the treasonous message relative to this very gold. He knew the cipher; he kept back an "enclosed paper." ' Who, think you, would believe in your innocence? "

Jared was smiling now, his self-possession back; and listening with a negligent interest.

"And this speech that you are rehearsing—when do you propose to make it? "

"Whenever you confide this matter to the public; or whenever I, as a United States officer, find it convenient to do so on my own account."

"But the straps on the sacks," I stammered, "with Daniel Clark's name, which prove that the gold came from Wilkinson? "

"Your friend, Mr. Dalrymple, is cautious, and has had ample opportunity to arrange the straps."

"If you—or we—summon the Vigilants here, I may be, probably will be unable to clear myself. But two other things are certain," declared Jared. "The gold will be confiscated; and Mr. Nolan, whatever story he may concoct, will be gravely implicated. His life may even be taken a second time."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"It is a pleasure," responded Nolan, gracefully, "to find you apprehend the situation so accurately. We are each other's hostages, Mr. Dalrymple. You will hardly ruin yourself for the sake of ruining me, though, if you do go down, you will take care to drag me after; while Colonel Russel there—your pardon, Mr. Miller—might sacrifice us both to clear the General, were it not for the money. The devil! Twenty-three sacks of gold is a matter worth saving. Are you disposed to listen? We have a proposition to make."

"Before you make it suppose we look over our premises." Jared was always for having his premises duly surveyed and enclosed by a neat little fence. "First, in the 'nineties, Wilkinson negotiated with Spain for the transfer of certain Mississippi river posts, though the transfer never was made. You were afterward shot, I remember. It is so uncanny making terms with a dead man, I should like to know how you managed it and why."

"Easily—fell over a shade before the order, 'Fire,' was obeyed, and the surgeon was hired to pronounce me dead. As for why—well, there had been transactions. I took the blame from everybody and departed this life with it. It was convenient all around, like emerging from a court of bankruptcy with a clean record. However, it is only fair to say that I am a cousin of myself at present, and it would be

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

pretty difficult to connect me with the old Phil.”

“And when Burr came along with this conspiracy—”

“We joined, the General and I.”

“Meaning to betray Burr to Spain in return for this?” and Jared motioned toward the gold.

“That is immaterial. When A. Burr, Esquire, undertakes to teach men treason, he runs the chance of being the person taught.”

“But this money is Wilkinson’s?”

“It is, if he ever gets it—with a commission for all concerned, yourself and my valiant captor included.”

“Well, your proposition?”

There was a pause. For myself, I was ashamed that Jared condescended to treat with them. Better any result than a hand in such nasty doings.

Then Miller spoke.

“I am a reputable Federal officer. Governor Tiffin knows my suspicions of Mr. Dalrymple. Any moment, I can send for him, show him the gold, and convict the two of you on that very evidence. First, then, we demand that you leave it here both for its safe-keeping and to prevent your working against us. Any attempt to remove it, any word to the public about this affair of to-night—and news goes to Chillicothe at once.”

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"You see," added Nolan, "the gold being Spanish and undeniably connected with the treason, implicates whoever is found concealing it. We could keep it no longer so we chose you as our most active enemy for the recipient. Did you ever play the game of Old Maid, Mr. Dalrymple? Draw cards around from each other's hands and whoever holds the Queen of Spades at the close, is beaten. It is monstrous fascinating. You hold it now. But the game is not over—work it back on us if you can. So much latitude is given your wits. And, in good time, we will reverse aims and get it back for keeps. Do you take a hand?"

"Faith, I do," answered Jared, "and I will play this game of yours to an end you never dreamed of."

"There is an English emissary to be met; also, we must have access to the Island. Your Vigilants prevent either. Now we want you to arrange for Mr. Nolan to keep his headquarters here, since here alone is security, and pass your patrol whenever he chooses."

"A pretty alternative. Heads—you win; tails—I lose. And I am going to take my chance of outwitting you at that."

"Unless you care to go partners with us. I can promise you an excellent proposition then. And you gain a respite in any case."

"Hang your respites and your propositions! Ezra, salute your captain. Now take Mr. Nolan

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

to the smoke-house and lock him up there—stoutly. Tie up this sack, stuff the camlet under it, and put Miller off the place. Then we will think up our course.”

“Such drastic proceedings you can ill afford,” Miller warned us. “I shall summon the authorities.”

“Oh, no, you won’t,” Jared spoke so easily that I felt he had somehow mastered the situation, “for the authorities would confiscate the gold, you know—those twenty-three sacks of glittering gold. Oh, how you would hate to part their company forever. I have a plan of my own that I shall at least attempt to operate, and I fancy you will wait, on the chance of tripping me in it, before you notify the authorities. Now do us the kindness to retire.”

Miller, after a volley of futile protests, motioned to Jared, and the two withdrew a few paces, while I once again with my pistol mounted guard over Nolan. They were talking low, and I could see flashes of anger dart from one to the other but no word could I hear distinctly.

“We have reached a *modus vivendi*,” said Jared presently, with a bow to Nolan.

The which, I take it from the outcome, was a sort of bargain, such as Ancy Ann drives with the store-keeper. Jared was always an immense hand at giving things fancy names. “Get some poetry about you, Ezra,” he would



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

say. "So much of the commonplace is dwarfing. If it is not to be found, and the Lord knows it never is in one's own county, make it up. See things crazily. Call a daisy a star; and the stars Miss Thankful's eyes; and Thankful's eyes a pair of peep-holes into Heaven. That's the whole of it; and had you but the knack of piling up the needful words and plastering the chinks with needless ones, you would be a poet and people would rave over you."

Why he wanted me to call a daisy a star, when there are plenty of stars without using up the flowers to make more; or why I should imagine the stars themselves into eyes for Thankful, who already has her quota, is a marvel to me. On a cloudy night, sure, it might do, or if Thankful were blind, but—ah, I fear me, I shall never be a poet.

Well, it seemed, as Jared now explained, that the only part of this *modus vivendi* that concerned Nolan and me was that Nolan was to be locked up and I to be his jailer; nor would he allow Miller to pass a word alone with my prisoner.

When Miller was finally gone and Nolan fastened securely in our smoke-house, we stored the gold and camlet under our own corn; but not till I had vigorously objected.

"Why not move it off our place into the woods yonder. Then we can lead the Vigi-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

lants to capture it without any risk to ourselves.”

“Because Miller doesn’t leave this granary an hour without a spy to watch it. He will give us the respite he promised only so long as the gold is not likely to be lost to him. The first bag we carry out of here, he will order our arrest and—*sic transit*. So ends a most promising pair of careers,” and he fell to whistling the tattoo.

“Then,” said I decisively, “I favor sending at once for the committee of investigation and giving them the whole story.”

“With the same result. There is evidence against us too great to be talked away.”

“With what result it is not for us to consider,” I insisted. “We are for the country, commissioned to capture this gold and frustrate the conspiracy not scheme like timorous civilians for our own skins.”

“To frustrate the conspiracy—exactly. The gold is secondary. If we follow your advice, we will be convicted, Wilkinson cleared, and the situation here left entirely in the hands of Miller. I can face unjust condemnation as steadfastly as you. It is even, in a way, alluring, isn’t it?—rather a fine thing to refuse any terms held out by evil and order Satan high-handedly behind us. But such heroics are not for us—now, not now, mind you. We may have to demean ourselves, cry mercy of Miller

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

and soil our hands in a dirty business. 'Tis distasteful, granted, to men of spirit who would like to play proud. But the conspiracy, Ezra, the conspiracy! The unity of the country is at stake. I have a plan and you are to help me carry it out. Ask no questions. Keep Eboli here and away from the Island; she will not surrender her code till she sees Blennerhassett. Never pass a word with Nolan, but so guard him as the three-headed dog guarded the Hesperian apples. Our whole success depends on his being kept a prisoner and holding no communication with Miller, the Island, or the emissary."

## CHAPTER XVII

JARED, I imagine, slept little that night. I doubt if he went to bed at all, so busy was he formulating some mammoth plan which he did not confide to me but with which he fully expected to checkmate Burr. For myself I slept but little either, though it was not the conspiracy that propped apart my lids. Miller's dictum that she loved me a little in a shallow, profitless way because I was good—ah, it was like an injection of fire into my veins. I did not believe it; in fairness to my modesty, understand that I did not believe it; but it

## 'The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

furnished a license to my thoughts of her and gave my emotions a new turn.

The next morning, she came into the office to ask Jared's permission, since he considered her his prisoner, to remove to the tavern. But he refused to allow it.

"You must stay here, for your own safety and ours," was his decree.

When he left us alone together, she said:

"You heard. For decency's sake, I would prefer not to abuse your hospitality further."

"Don't mind about me. I beg of you, don't trouble yourself over me. I—I ask your pardon anyway."

"For what?" Her tones were metallic and entirely expressionless.

"For believing you an angel. It's one of a man's many ways of wronging a woman that he must seek to justify his own madness by assuming her good enough to warrant it. The fault was all mine."

She turned to go; I barred the way.

"The fault was mine," I repeated loudly.

"An amended fault makes an objectless discussion. By your leave."

As she tried to dodge past me I caught her wrists and held her fast, while I talked at her rapidly the thoughts the night had brought.

"The fault is amended. I have no misapprehension about you now. From this day henceforth I love you, not for your virtues,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

nor for your beauty either, miss, but because — oh, because I do. Because every fiber in you draws me to you. My dust will somehow blow and sift on yours in the generations after we are dead. My soul will leave the Throne of Grace and the company of the saved that I've been at such pains to head it for, and go tagging, naked and disembodied, wherever you may lead over cold hills of clouds and desolate starry wastes. This is the only love I ever gave you worth the giving. I'm not a niggard with it now, doling it out in fair barter for some of yours, a piece for a piece. I am seeking no recompense. I don't expect you to be worthy it. I can pour it forth generously and ask no return. Take it and me. We are yours. The powers have willed it. There's no loyalty in me to any other."

She remained, to appearances, perfectly untouched by my vehemence.

"You are a fool," she said in calm, measured tones when I had done. "It may interest you to know that you are a much greater fool than I had been supposing."

Indeed I had climbed out of my senses onto the towering top of the silliest, most ecstatic passion that ever lifted a man half way to Heaven. It may be that unshaken fidelity to a cruel master is a high attribute of a noble soul; or it may be, as Eboli said, only a fool's fatuous clinging to his folly. In the days fol-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

lowing, a duel was waged between her and me that, in its progress and results, I can liken only to the epic soul-conflict of Job with God. She showed me all the evil and heartlessness that was in her. She wounded me with every cruel gibe. She strove to disgust me by her frivolous behavior toward my fellow Vigilants. Through it all, even as Job declared in his agony, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him," so I, with every heart beat, was mutely crying to her:

"You may hurt me at your pleasure, but you shall not take away my love. I shall love you, love you, go on loving you till death forever parts, or eternally unites us."

The next day was a Sabbath and we all went to church but Jared, who was off to the East with his Vigilants in pretended pursuit of the Spanish gold. "It wouldn't do, for appearance's sake, to give over the search too easily," he had said to me.

Well, I arranged a bed in one corner of the smoke-house and made it habitable with what comforts I could procure. 'Twas a drear, dark prison even after I had done my best by it, though no worse than Nolan's deserts. I then bolted the door, stationed my Newfoundland, Nero, in front of it and went, as I said, to church.

The service was well on, when steps were heard in the passage and, after the manner of



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

our church, every one turned to look at the late-comer. The house was none too full; folks were little religious those days with French ways the fashion, and few were sitting near the entrance.

I turned also to observe the new-comer and my eyes almost started from my head. For there, standing near the door, was Philip Nolan himself, in the camlet cloak, and not having the grace to remove his hat, which was drawn low over his brows. I should have leaped out and seized my prisoner then and there, for I wasn't minded to disobey Jared a second time, but Thankful and Eboli protested, bidding me wait in seemly fashion till service was over. Their advice prevailed, partly because our whisperings so incensed Ancy Ann that now the attention of minister and audience was diverted from Nolan to us.

After every one had seen him, suddenly and noiselessly he disappeared — "which," Thankful declared afterward, "may show lack of piety, but it does not prove him a traitor," and a mightily abused man she insisted that he was.

I rushed home after the benediction, indecorously rushed, on the Sabbath day, anxious to get at the smoke-house. But the smoke-house was locked and protected by the dog, just as I had left it. Nolan was within. I shoved him in his noon meal, which I abstracted from the

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

larder before Ancy Ann's return. Jared's admonitions were needless; never a word do I exchange with a dead man who can make so uncanny an escape and such a public show of himself. I looked under the gold, where we had hidden the cloak—it was gone. He had found it evidently and carried it away. Jared was vexed with me when I told my story.

"A dead man! Does a dead man eat corn bread and bacon? Look to your locks. I can't do everything myself. Yes, there is some harm done for Cousin Lucinda knows now that he is about. That was probably his reason for showing himself in church. We do not want those two to patch up a meeting. But I needn't scold. I am as great a blunderer as you, or I would have destroyed that cloak before he had a chance to use it."

Nolan's second escape was more mischievous in its possible results. The night it occurred, I was on patrol duty about the Island. Jared had just passed me on his round of inspection, when a canoe shot out from the Island shore, its occupant, a man wrapped in a camlet cloak. I shouted and gave chase. The man rounded a bend and was lost to sight. Other guards came up, and Jared himself, but the man in camlet had escaped.

"He is a ghost. Say what you please, he is a ghost," I declared, when we found him, on our return, safe in his prison guarded by Nero.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Blame *me* for letting a ghost slip through a chink in the logs!"

"Then Phil Nolan has been to the Island, likely having bribed some of our guard," Jared said. "All goes forward. Burr is being made a hero in Kentucky, and our hands the while are tied."

One day he directed me to send for O'Mallory, and the Irishman smilingly came to our office.

"Bedad, 'tis pleased I am to know the man in camlet is about again. Ye'll not deny *now* that ye are the wan?"

"It is useless to deny it to you. Words are too precious to waste," which stand I approved. We had tried hard enough to convince that dogged fellow.

"Say I am the camlet man or any other man you choose. How is your conspiracy?"

"*Our* conspiracy. Well, the boats are near finished and matters here almost ready for the start. About the English fleet and Wilkinson, ye know more than I. 'Tis good to believe again that the General is solid with us. Ah, you were wrong about him that time. Corn, he said, would be in the sacks and, by the saints! corn it was. What! Ye are not convinced yet? Arrah now, don't be pig-headed. Ye saw for yerself."

"O'Mallory, there were two carts of sacks; the one honest corn, the other gold. It is

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

stored yonder, not a hundred feet off in our granary—twenty-three sacks of Spanish gold. But never a word of this on your life, mind, to any of your associates. Ezra, show it him as a proof.”

I led O'Mallory to the granary, marveling much that Jared should take this man so far into his confidence. When I opened a sack, displaying the gold inside it, O'Mallory gazed at it dumbfounded, examined the weave of the sack and the fastenings, then, with anathemas upon all commissioned officers, hurried back to the office. I took bare time to cover back the layer of corn and tie up the sack before I followed.

“That Spanish gold must convince you that Wilkinson is in the pay of Spain and therefore hostile to Burr, though he may use him to further his own ends,” Jared was saying. “Believe, if you choose, that I contrived in an underhand manner to save it from the Vigilants, meaning to use it in Burr’s behalf and for the furtherance of the conspiracy. And believe, since you are bound to, that I own the camlet cloak. At least, I do know the whereabouts of the English princess and can communicate with her at any time. Now, admitting that I am with you in this affair, what is your first move?”

“Bedad, our first move seems to be idling here waiting on the boss. Whenever Burr sig-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

nifies, we are to start South to the rendezvous he names. There are a half dozen other boats with recruits from the East to come with us, and Blennerhassett will join us, too, if he can slip the patrol. I don't understand why ye, the very man in camlet, won't pass me to the Island so that I can talk it over with him. 'Tis never a glimpse ye let me get of Blennerhassett."

"You have sole command of the boats and stores in Marietta?"

"I have."

"You could move them any moment of your own authority, if you chose, without waiting Burr's command?"

"Sure, I'm Marshal of the Empire."

"Your recruits are ready for any wild adventure or they would not be in this. It is a splendid opportunity for the daring and unscrupulous, but Aaron Burr is over-slow. Look you, he has proved himself over-slow. The irons are hot, yet he does not strike. Suppose he would start to-morrow Wilkinson would let you pass unchallenged every fort on the Mississippi. At Orleans, you would find the English fleet ready to assist. Mexico intends to let Burr march in unresisted, expecting to turn and rend him afterward; but his victory will be so dazzling it will bring him recruits by hundreds. Being forewarned, he can depose Wilkinson from the command of the army and

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

use it, before Spain is aware, to forge fetters that Mexico can never break. One bold stroke like this, and all is done. Behold, here is gold a-plenty for soldiers' pay and bribes; but Burr—do you not say?—is over-slow.”

“That he is—bad cess to him. Arrah now, if it was Napoleon we had! And the English fleet waiting by Orleans! But did ye say ye've seen my princess, and is the English fleet waiting by Orleans?”

Jared was very serious as he rose.

“O'Mallory, the money I showed you ought to strengthen your confidence in me. Moreover, you believe me to be the only man who can arrange about the English fleet. Now will you allow me to hurry matters? Put yourself under my orders instead of Burr's, and move your men and your boats South whenever I say the word?”

“Souls in Purgatory! and that I will. Cut Burr clean out if ye are minded. 'Tis little I care for him. Usurp him, leave him stick to his clients and his Blackstone. By the holy saints, my men and I will take you in his place, bedad!—that we will; and set ye snug on that 'throne of the Montezumas' that there's such a pothor over—of the which, possession is ten points out of nine any day and let them oust ye if they can. Why Burr is no more than half the size of ye. Ye'er a man for men. We'll follow ye. All we want is adventure,



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

with honor and plunder for headlights, and danger spread on thick for a relish."

Rather to my surprise, Jared did not repudiate this idea of personal ambition.

"Then it is a promise? You accept me for your leader no matter what Burr's moves may be later; and will turn over to me your boats and stores whenever I order?"

To this, O'Mallory repeated all his vows of confidence and promised by the thigh bone of his patron, Saint Michael, to do even so. He left us still muttering:

"Bedad, that man Burr is slow. A. Burr, Esquire, will never give dust to Bonaparte, nor," with an encouraging wink, "to Jared Dalrymple."

"So much is well," Jared said to me when he was gone; "if he gives me his boats, the conspirators can't use them."

But no further word of his plans could I draw from him.

## CHAPTER XVIII

THE next days were a constant nightmare to me. Excitement over the treason increased. Any day now, Burr might be faring forth; and Jared, so far as I knew, had yet discovered no way of hindering him. Then

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

General Putnam announced to a mass meeting that trace was lost of the Spanish gold somewhere about Marietta, that it was probably stored in or near town, and that one and all should be on the lookout for anything suspicious.

Worst of all, Philip Nolan kept escaping. Let Nero and I guard him as we would, he still kept escaping. One time or another, nearly every one in Marietta had caught a glimpse of him. The famous cloak was a by-word. He crossed back and forth to the Island in spite of our patrol.

Sometimes there was a lady with him, who, as it proved, was Thankful. It was the chief of Eboli's misdeeds that she took advantage of Thankful's innocence to inveigle the girl deliberately into the conspiracy. Jared explained to me that Eboli, in view of her untoward adventure on Sassafras Hill, was afraid to meet Nolan and so confined herself to sending by Thankful messages verbal and written. This phase of the affair troubled me for I learned from Thankful that Nolan took advantage of their meetings to make ardent love to her and that she was quite carried away with his fine phrasings. While I was not in conceit with marrying her myself, I had no mind to give her over to a rapsallion like Nolan—and a dead rapsallion at that. Jared, however, took their flirtation calmly enough.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"It is better and safer for her to go than Eboli. No harm will come to her. I promise you that no harm will come to Thankful."

How he knew so positively was beyond me, but in those days there were mysteries under every stone. When he supplemented his assurances by a profession of his own adoration for the girl, stating that, with my kind permission he would wed her in a month or so, I grew pettish.

"She doesn't care for you, or me—or any one nowadays but Phil. He has bewitched her; and from the coolness with which you regard it, I begin to think that there's something in this affair of Nolan which you are not telling me."

"To be frank, I have concocted a noble little stratagem. Its first object is to keep Miller inactive. Its ultimate aim is to secure that 'enclosed paper' from Nolan. If we can once get possession of that we can prove our loyalty to Governor Tiffin. Miller and Nolan I find, are none too good friends. Each is counting on all sorts of treachery in the other. If I can only get the Burr order from Blennerhassett, with that and a little something of Eboli's as a voucher, I may be able to coax Phil's paper away from him. But how to do it? That is my secret."

"So it seems. 'Twould be mine also, if you had any confidence in me."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"I have all confidence in you, Ezra, but you are no actor. You couldn't deceive Miller for one second, nor keep your countenance before a roomful of Vigilants."

This was true enough. Whenever the man in camlet or the Spanish gold was the subject of a conversation, I—well, I held my peace. But I had feelings of having hidden something wicked for which all Marietta was searching and that the searchers were getting hotter every hour. Jared showed no treachery in his bearing, but I felt guilty and am sure I looked it. If this stratagem of his involved the daily practicings of any other deceptions, I was grateful that he kept it to himself.

"It may be the girls who release him," Jared said, regarding Nolan's frequent escapes, "or it may be Miller."

We readily decided that it was not Miller for Nero, who had a special hatred of Miller, was kept constantly by the smoke-house with the excuse to Ancy Ann that we feared thievery of the meat. Jared was equally certain that it was not Thankful. Indeed, we had never caught either of the girls showing the slightest interest in the building.

"But if he makes love to Thankful, wouldn't he tell her where he is confined so that she could help him?" I asked.

"He would hardly represent himself in so ridiculous a plight. Shut in a black and slip-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

perry dungeon—that will bear telling a fair lady; but a prisoner among hams and bacon! It would never do.”

That was Jared’s version, and, considering Eboli’s interest in Nolan and her histrionic powers, he laid the mischief onto her. But I knew better; and I thought whatever he said, that he did also, for we kept the key of the smoke-house where she could not possibly have found it. Moreover, I had altered the lock a half dozen times and tested for sawed-out logs, excavations, and the like to no result. I myself believed Nolan a spirit and so mysteriously did he elude all pursuers that most people soon came to my way of thinking. I am not minded at this late day of all the ambushes laid for him, but he always came through safely. It was marvelous. Frank Miller abetted him indeed, and he might have bribed others of our men, but to escape the watchfulness of a whole town—few scoffed now at the notion of his being the old dead Phil.

My apprehensions regarding his uncanny courtship of Thankful were quickened by a chance conversation I overheard between Jared and O’Mallory.

“Arrah, ye sly dog—I saw ye in the grove with yer cloak on and yer arm about a little lady. My princess, was it? I’ll not worry but she’ll give ye the signal for the fleet. Sure,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

what is to hinder yer marrying her—a foine fellow like ye. King George's son-in-law would be a greater man than Burr. King George would set ye up in business with that 'throne of the Montezumas'—and then what noble influence ye could use in Ireland's behalf. Marry her, mon, marry her."

"Does your stratagem you spoke of have anything to do with working O'Mallory for his boats and stores, and making him think you a budding Bonaparte?" I asked.

"No. If the wheels of my stratagem don't slip a cog, and we manage to get hold of Nolan's 'enclosed paper,' we shan't need anything of O'Mallory. But there are so many cogs yet for it to pass. In a last great emergency such as we may have to face, O'Mallory's boats and men might prove our salvation and the country's. Watch Nolan—that is your part. Don't let him really get outside that smoke-house." I recalled later, though I scarcely heeded it at the time, that Jared said "really" and bit his lip vexedly afterward. "I mean don't let Nolan get away or have an interview with Miller."

One evening I saw the tail of that camlet cloak disappearing around a corner. Taking pursuit as always, I was surprised to see its wearer dart into the rear of O'Mallory's warehouse. The back door was locked when I came up, and, entering through the front, I



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

could see in the glimmer of a poorly lighted inner room, the man in camlet and Frank Miller deep in conversation. O'Mallory, however, had evidently been stationed as a sentinel. Before I had time to think, I was looking down the barrel of his pistol and listening to his whisper.

"Whisht, mon, don't make a noise to disturb them. 'Tis that darlint Jared himself, and Miller doesn't know it. He told me to have the room dark so he wouldn't be too visible and to keep off all pursuers. I'm grand at obeying orders, so whisht, mon, whisht. Hould your arguments for, loving you so dear, 'tis sad I'd be to string a bullet through your words."

O'Mallory's idea that Jared was the man in the cloak appeared to me as fantastic as ever, but his pistol and his determined bearing were impressively real. I glared at him the unprintable things that he cut me off from saying. Meanwhile I carefully noted down, intending to repeat it to Jared, the conversation in the next room. It seemed that Miller was dissatisfied with Nolan for he was saying:

"I insisted on an interview because—well, I've helped you conscientiously to pass back and forth to the Island and escape the Vigilants, but you give me no hint of your purposes or what you have accomplished. It looks to me as if you intentionally avoided meeting

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

me; and all the while time is slipping. Now I want a report. Tell me your plans, or else work out mine."

"You don't put as much confidence in me as you might," the man in the cloak observed very hoarsely — Wilbur's draughty smoke-house, he explained had given him an infernal cold.

"Not much. You were slippery always, and in this matter you are not incriminated far enough to insure your keeping faith with us. Besides, you have an advantage in that you are dead. It's hard to get a hold on a dead man. Your opportunity to betray the rest of us any time is too good for my liking."

"The point is, you mean to keep tab on me?"

"The point is, I'm your foreman. You can meet me here without much danger and make your reports. Where is that 'enclosed paper'?"

"That is what you don't know."

"Do you, or don't you mean to give it to Mary Ann in exchange for her code?"

"Yes. Only she wants the Burr order as well."

"We can't go South without that code. If I had her off alone, as you do, I'd secure it."

"Maybe you would get her off alone first. She's been sending her messages by a substitute, a Miss Thankful, who has appropriated me for a lover. General Jimmie ought to pay

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

me an extra bit or two for all the squashy talk I've had to concoct, keeping up the play."

"You haven't seen Mary Ann herself?"

"Deuce a once. She won't come."

"Then," said Miller decisively, "we'll arrest Dalrymple and Wilbur at once and start South, taking her with us. She will surrender the code fast enough, once she is on the river."

The man in the cloak gave a start and swallowed dryly, as if he were deeply moved by our predicament. "And the gold?" he said.

"We will have to take our chance about that. If you don't do something, I will."

"She will give her signals peaceably," he of the cloak declared, "for the 'enclosed paper' and the Burr warrant."

"Give them to her," ordered Miller.

"I haven't the Burr warrant."

"Get it from Blennerhassett then."

"I will to-night." He seemed to consider the conference over but Miller barred his egress.

"I don't trust you—not overly," he repeated. "You are not far enough implicated. I mean to take a hand in this myself. Give me the 'enclosed paper.'"

"It is a risk. I thought you wanted to keep your record white and not be mixed into it yourself."

"I take risks," Miller remarked.

"Very well, but you can't take Wilkinson's 'enclosed paper.' That is mine for my own

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

safety till matters are arranged with Mary Ann and the expedition started. You can have the Burr order," he added, "when I get it to-night, and help negotiate with her for its exchange. We will work together since you insist."

This was accepted by Miller as a pacificatory suggestion and the two grew quite amiable.

"I'd rather not meet you here oftener than I must. You are on patrol to-night about the Island," his cloaked colleague presently arranged it; "have your canoe in the North Inlet hidden under the clump of buckeyes. As I return from Blennerhassett's, I can pass close to the water's edge and fling you the Burr warrant without the dangers attending another interview."

And it was so decided, Miller adding that if Jared should change his place on the patrol, he would venture landing on the Island and meeting Nolan somewhere about the grounds, so that the Burr order could not by a mishap be thrown into the canoe of any other Vigilant.

When the two were gone, O'Mallory released me with a laugh at my enraged sputterings.

"You idiot," he said. "It is Jared Dalrymple. I talked to him myself. Ah, 'tis the foine acthor he is, blarneying himself up to Miller as the banshee of dead Nolan."

I would have argued with him, had we not

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

in the past exhausted all conceivable arguments upon him. Besides it was growing late and Jared must be informed of the talk I had just heard.

Jared exhibited some slight amusement when I told him of my adventure at the warehouse, but he did not overlook the gravity of the matter.

"Miller must not have Burr's warrant," he said. "The fewer important documents he possesses the better for us. It is this way. For a glimpse of the warrant, Eboli has promised to prove the genuineness of her code by giving up the first page of it. Now if we, instead of Miller, can obtain the Burr order and the first page of her code, I can—at least, I think I can win Nolan's confidence by means of them, persuade him that I have myself turned conspirator, and prevail on him to give me his 'enclosed paper.' But there's one thing of paramount importance. Miller must not grow suspicious of the man in camlet. Once he takes matters out of his colleague's hands, our chances end. You overheard him say as much." Then he went on to explain how we would secure the Burr order.

"Phil Nolan, you say, is to toss it to-night into the boat anchored just beneath the buck-eyes in the North Inlet. I shall station you at that post and let him throw the order to you instead of Miller."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

It was done even so, Jared removing Miller despite his objections to another post.

"Wait here, Ezra," he then ordered. "Don't worry for fear Nolan will discover the ruse and fail to come with the warrant. He will come. He must come, you see, and throw that warrant or Miller will grow suspicious of him. Don't try to think; your brain isn't your weapon. Don't look around you—remember Lot's wife."

"But Miller will land on the Island and warn Nolan that the boats are changed. I heard him say he would."

"He may land if he chooses, but mark this and take my word for it—he will not obtain an interview this night with the man in the cloak."

"The Island's not so big but they can find each other. I know Miller. He will leave me waiting here like a dolt while he warns Nolan. I'll not do it and be a butt for them again. Unless you stay by Miller yourself to see that he doesn't leave his post, I mutiny."

So firm was I about this that Jared, to get me to fulfil my part in his plan, was forced to yield to my demand. He gave his promise, though, to remain at Miller's elbow in such very silky, soothing tones that I had a suspicion he was only seeking to quiet me and did not mean a word of what he said.

"Now are you content to wait here?" he



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

concluded. "Very well. Keep your eyes shut and your ears shut and your mind a blank, and wait; just wait. You are stout and a fighter. Whatever document is flung you, guard it with your best strength should any one try to wrest it from you."

Well, I waited as I was told, though rather reluctantly; and I probably should have gone on waiting and secured the Burr order if some Vigilants had not rowed up with the news that the man in camlet was just seen about the palace grounds. They inquired for Jared; they had been vainly searching the entire patrol for him. It seemed to them and to me that whenever the man in the cloak was at large, Jared was nowhere to be found. I referred them to Miller's post, glad of an opportunity to learn positively whether or not Jared was keeping his promise to me. I was irritated and uneasy when they shouted as they passed on their return that neither Miller nor Jared was at the place indicated.

Waiting there alone for Nolan's coming while Miller stole away for a secret interview with him—it reminded me too forcibly of a certain bastion. Where was Jared? O'Mallory's statement that Jared himself was the man in camlet recurred to me. Jared, I reflected indignantly, would have a hard time proving an alibi. Meanwhile, what was I to do? Leave Miller at large unwatched? I tied my canoe

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

securely to one of the buckeyes, reflecting that Nolan, if he did pass, could throw his warrant into an empty boat as well as an occupied one. Moreover, the night was dark and the boat nearly hidden. I huddled my outer coat in the further end of it and decided that, in the haste of the moment, Nolan would easily think it his confederate stretched out on the canoe's bottom. Then I hurried off to prevent Miller in the interim from getting a word with him. Jared had broken his pledge; I was under no obligation to keep mine.

I crept cautiously ashore, eluding Blennerhassett's pickets and made my way across the grounds. The man in camlet was just leaving the residence. As I stole after him through the shadows, I observed Miller stealthily doing the same. The manœuvres of the two were so peculiar that they almost diverted me from my own purposes. Miller tried to get close to the man, he sought to cross his path, to attract his attention in some way. He called, "Phil, Phil," as loud as he dared, but all in vain. If his confederate had been as deaf and blind as Jared had wished me, it could not have made less impression. Darting in and out among the trees, he was steadily advancing to the path that led past my canoe, seeming almost of intention to avoid a meeting with Miller. I followed, determined to interfere forcibly if the two drew near each other.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

As we reached the North Inlet I lost sight of Miller. I saw him of the cloak deftly toss a paper in among the buckeyes, before I had realized that we were at the point where my boat was anchored. Mindful of Jared's orders now, I sprang down to the water's edge, intending to secure the document; but Miller, that quick-witted villain of a Miller, was before me. Failing to get a conference with his ally, he had noted my absence and sprung just at the nick of time into my proper post. Already the rope was cut and the canoe a distance from the shore.

My boat stolen before my very eyes, and having nothing better to do, I tore madly after the man in camlet, determined when I caught him to make a round reckoning upon his body. But he had too good a start and was lost in the darkness of a grove.

Presently, while I was yet clinching my fists angrily, Jared himself appeared.

"It is about time for you to get visible," I complained. "If you had stayed with Miller as you promised, I'd have had the Burr warrant instead of him."

"Do you mean— The devil and all his followers! Weren't you—there was a man in the boat when that packet was thrown—wasn't it you?"

"No, it wasn't," I replied churlishly. "I was after that rogue of a Nolan, though deuce

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

a bit will I ever try to run down a ghost again till I have traded my heels for wings. Miller has the Burr warrant; but you needn't blame me for it. If you had kept your promise and not been tricking me, we would have had it this moment ourselves."

### CHAPTER XIX

FOR two days following, no mention was made by either of us of that night's fiasco.

"As you know," Jared then said, "Eboli has promised to give the first page of her code for a view of Burr's order. There is an interview between certain parties planned for to-night at the Violet in the Dell. If all goes as I expect, I shall return from it with the order and her first page. With them as my guarantees, I hope, as I've been telling you, to inveigle Nolan into giving me his 'enclosed paper.'"

"Why not get the page from Eboli here at home. It is simpler."

"Because Miller says the Violet in the Dell—and Miller has the Burr warrant. He showed it to her yesterday evening in your parlor." This was a sore point and Jared dodged over it. "Miller has the warrant; Nolan has Wilkinson's written promise to turn traitor,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

which is all we need to clear us; and I have nothing but my wits. Yet I purpose in the end to get whatever I may want from everybody. It is all a part of my stratagem."

"Eboli won't go near the Violet in the Dell," I objected, "especially if Miller is concerned."

"For her own sake I should hope not. She will send Thankful as she has been doing, and there is no particular danger to Thankful. She knows no secrets and Miller knows she doesn't."

Still I did not approve of Thankful's keeping trysts at disreputable roadhouses, nor did Jared.

"And that is why I want you," he added. "You are to keep watch on her from without and see her home. By means of my stratagem, I am going to get the Burr order from Miller and the first page from Thankful. Then I will come back here while they wait for me to return with Nolan's 'enclosed paper.' How? Oh, don't ask how I will manage it. I have found a way. The point for you is that they will wait in vain. I will not return to the roadhouse. Once I obtain from Nolan the proof of the General's treachery I shall take it straight to Chillicothe."

The plan sounded very well. I approved any plan which involved a trick on Miller. Noting his unwillingness, I did not insist on Jared's telling me its details. Since my failure

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

to secure the Burr warrant at the Island, I was very modest about interfering with Jared's arrangements.

That same day Reverend Manasseh Cutler visited us. This good man, the spiritual father of our settlement, had been little among us of late, having returned to the East after our colony was founded and safe headed toward Christianity. But he happened in Marietta again, holding some meeting, and he spent a night at our house, as Ancy Ann was one of the brightest lights of his early church.

I remember the occasion well. After the preacher, General Putnam addressed the people, having them ready gathered to hand, about the Spanish gold and other subjects of like import. The days were short then, and it was already dark when Reverend Cutler reached our home. I stabled his horse hastily for I heard Ancy Ann fumbling at the smoke-house.

"Is it you or Jared who has arranged these bolts?" she scolded. The smoke-house was in the rear of the lot, rather out of her province.

"There are thieves about. Jared said the meats would be safer kept well locked. Go, feed the horse, and I will get down a ham."

Now Ancy Ann, it seems, had besought Reverend Manasseh to say a few words to Thankful anent her folly over Philip Nolan. So at bedtime, when he knelt with us, he prayed for the man in the camlet cloak to be



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

confounded in his mischief, and silly maids to be delivered from their giddiness and much more to the same purpose. Thankful's cheeks burned angrily. It is human to object to being prayed over. Sure, when Ancy Ann, who delivers our nightly petitions, asks the Lord to give me better than my deserts and to be merciful to my sins and shortcomings, which she is always at pains to set forth and enumerate, lest He overlook any—when she does this, I am minded to rise from my knees, give over religion to the women, and turn skeptic like Tom Jefferson and the rest.

“Is it a sin to love?” Thankful exclaimed when the prayer was ended. “I may know naught of him, as you say, and may have seen little even of his face and may be fascinated only by his courtly wooing. Suppose 'tis true. He loves me—isn't that enough to know? And if the mystery and romance and fine talk have fascinated me, what shall I care about the beauty of his face? He loves me—sure, no man could speak so, otherwise. For all this love, isn't it at least his due that I look within me and consider whether God has sent him, as I have heard God does send men, destining me for him?”

“Thankful!” Ancy Ann exclaimed, “has it gone thus far, that you dare to think of marrying him—you, who are promised to my brother?”

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Thankful, in the reaction following her outbreak, had fallen to sobbing. With the freedom of long acquaintance she dropped her head on my shoulder, and her tears down my neck.

"I wish you could hear his beautiful talk, Ezra," she whispered. "Oh, if you or—or Jared would only talk to me like that!"

I never could be stern with the child and I cautioned even Ancy Ann when she advanced to separate us. But despite me, she whisked Thankful off to bed in disgrace. Eboli, in her corner, had been nervously closing and unclosing her hands while she watched the scene. Whether she thought, from my tenderness toward Thankful, that I loved her as a prospective wife, I don't know. As she passed me to go to her room, she gave me one single glance eloquent of humiliation at her own conduct in regard to the girl. I hastened to flash her my forgiveness, but she had already looked away.

Bedtime at our house was early, and the tryst at the Violet was set for ten. When I reached the tavern, Jared posted me in hiding at one side of the road near the building.

"Thankful will steal away from home and arrive presently," he said. "Speak to her when she passes and tell her to call on you if she is afraid. Then stay outside right here till she is ready to return to Marietta. There is not the slightest danger to Thankful."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Where will you be the while and what will you do?" I asked.

"For awhile I'll be just back of that elm tree yonder; but don't bother about me. You have nothing to do with me. I will go inside presently."

"If there should be a fight and the odds against me—"

"I've some Vigilants back in the woods, not very close yet for we don't want a crowd. As soon as I leave for Marietta, I will draw them nearer, within calling distance. These are your orders and they are most explicit. Don't leave your post. Don't go prowling after enlightenment regarding my whereabouts or actions, and pay absolutely no attention to anything passing inside unless you should hear Thankful call you. Your life nor mine's not worth a fig if you disobey."

It was near ten when I heard the sound of a horse's hoofs up the road. There was a gentle, "whoa," a caressing murmur to a pony to stand steady while the rider dismounted, and then a lady came tripping up the foot-path near me. When I stepped forward and confronted her, to my consternation, I found it was Eboli herself.

"You—you—I thought 'twould be Thankful."

"The Violet in the Dell at midnight is hardly a fit place for her. I didn't know before

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

that she cared so seriously for Nolan. When I found it out I—I had another qualm.”

“But I came to protect Thankful. That is my part in it—what I am here for,” said I a bit querulously for I could not reconcile myself to having her thus disrupt Jared’s plan.

“Go back, Ezra. Thankful is safe at home, and there might be trouble for you if you stayed. I have an engagement yonder.”

My brain is not my weapon, but in this crisis it was working very fast. I recalled as much as Jared had told me of his purposes, how he was to obtain the warrant and the first page of the signal code and hurry off to Marietta while Thankful and Miller waited at the inn for him to return with Nolan’s paper; how he would not return. When Miller became aware of this, with Eboli in his power, what measures would he not take to wrest her code from her? Clearly, she must not place herself in such dreadful jeopardy.

“Do you know with whom your appointment is?”

“With Miller and the man in camlet. One will protect me from the other. Go back to Thankful. The quarrel is none of yours.”

So, then, she was evidently counting on Phil Nolan’s presence. I wondered if Jared knew it. “There is an immense risk,” I insisted.

“There is an immense stake. Go, Ezra.”

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Go? And leave you in this danger?" I laughed at the proposition. "I stay if you do."

"It is my danger, and I choose to face it alone. You know the truth about me, I have forfeited an honest man's chivalry. You don't love me now."

"Suppose, madam, that I do."

"You don't. It went forever that night when you found out, and it is only hard hours and harsh thoughts I've caused you since."

"Hard hours buck a man into the truth, and the truth is that I am loving you in spite of everything. I don't care what you are, I love you. Oh, I'm a lune but I love you. Do you hear? I love you."

I almost shouted it in my paroxysm. Eboli shuddered and stretched out her fingers as if groping for something. Her eyes stared at me in a certain awe.

"What is the answer to it, Ezra?" she said presently in a dull, dead voice.

"I doubt there isn't any—unless you love me too," I added in a last frantic hope, "a little mite and, as Miller says, because I am good. I wouldn't mind so greatly if it were because I am good."

"A little mite—that is an insult to passion's dignity. If it weren't for the lights of London flaring off yonder—and the laughter and the dancing—I have tried for your soul's sweet peace to make you hate me; tried—and failed."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Tried; and failed," I repeated with a tinge of triumph, holding out my arms to coax her into them. "What next?"

"Nothing. Put your hands down. I'm too wise for impulses when there's so long a life ahead to repent in. But oh, if this were all, and to-night had no to-morrow, of what great things one would be capable! Go back, Ezra, go back out of harm's way and forget if you can. No, no, not a kiss nor a touch nor a tender word of farewell. You shall have nothing from me to stamp it on your memory. Now go."

I did not go nor, for a moment, did she. Once she reached out her hand toward mine as if a magnet drew it against her will. Then, suddenly, before I could stop her, she turned and ran toward the tavern and away from me as if I had been the very pestilence.

I heard the door close behind her; and found myself face to face with the problem of the conspiracy. Jared had not figured on this contingency. He had been so certain the woman would be Thankful. Here was justification surely for my breaking his orders and telling him at once.

So thinking, I crept around the tavern and in sight of the elm where Jared had told me he would be. Then I gave a dismayed start. It was not Jared standing there, but that hateful mysterious figure, the man in the camlet



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

cloak. Where was Jared? What had happened to him? With what misadventure might he not have met?

Even as the realization flashed upon me, the man, getting some signal from within of Eboli's arrival, vaulted the fence that separated us from the tavern and was entering a side room. I plunged after him. The door was fastened, and I resorted to a slit in the window curtain for a view of what was going on inside. The man in the cloak stood in the shadow, his hat as ever drawn low over his brows. I saw his start when he recognized Eboli. I heard his hoarse voice stating that the paper which so compromised the General, the 'enclosed paper' as it was known, was concealed at a little distance from the Violet. He had been far too wise to bring it with him into Miller's stronghold, nor would he do so unless safeguarded in some way beyond Miller's bare word. How could he say but Miller was at heart with the United States and would sell out him, Phil Nolan, as soon as the documents incriminating General Wilkinson had been surrendered? At length he promised, in return for Burr's order and the first page of the signal code, to go and bring his own paper to the tavern, receiving for it another and more useful section of the code. Then, if by daylight all still seemed fair, he would deposit with O'Mallory the Burr order where Eboli could

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

get it any time in exchange for the rest of the code.

At all this plotting, a mighty sense of responsibility rested upon me. Eboli would be safe enough if I let them carry out this program, but what of the country? What of Jared? Nor was Eboli apparently safe in the opinion of the camlet man for I saw him as he passed her, unbeknown to Miller, shove a pistol underneath her shawl and whisper something in her ear. Then he left the room by the way he had come; and almost at the same moment, Eboli, acting as I judged upon his private warning, made a dart for the opposite door and freedom. Miller, ever watchful, flung her back, just as the man in camlet appeared on the high step above me. I leaped beside him, upon him in a frantic determination to get to her assistance. Before he had time to realize what had happened or whence his adversary came, I had with my left hand wrested from him the packet over which there had been so much haggling, while my right fist crashed against his cheek, sending him over the stoop and bumping against a stump below.

I gave him one look. He was a motionless heap, not likely to make trouble for an hour or so to come. Then I dashed inside and sprang upon Miller with my hunting knife while I shouted to Eboli to go—go the back way while the passage was clear.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

I dimly heard Miller's exclamation, "It's that fool of a Wilbur," and his call for help. Then I had enough to do for other antagonists rushed in against me. I was forced back and back. One fellow sprang at my throat, impelled by Miller's order to take my papers from me, for I had not had opportunity to conceal them. There was a pistol shot—evidently somewhere in the room I had an ally—and he rolled off. Freed for the moment, and determined that what I could not keep my opponents should never have, I thrust the papers into a candle. Some one knocked my hand, and lamp and papers went tumbling and blazing on the floor.

It was Reub Hannigan who attacked me now with a flashing sword. Miller's shout, "Don't kill him," saved my throat; another pistol shot from my unseen friend, and Rueb's arm fell at the instant of thrusting. There were other shots which went wild; then my knife broke in my hands. I was forced back into a corner on a trap door it must have been, for I felt the floor give way beneath me and myself lose consciousness as I dropped, dropped, dropped into the darkness of the cellar below.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

### CHAPTER XX

WHEN I came to my senses, I was bound hand and foot to the floor of the Violet's cellar. Despite tales of murky doings in that place and the piratical character of the roadhouse, I had a wondrously comfortable feeling at being there. Chained in an underground hole is none so bad in a worse comparison. I had supposed that my first task on awakening would be to gather up my fragments and get them into seemly shape for an appearance at the resurrection levee. If a man survives a conflict with a dozen swords and a tumble down cellar-stairs into vacancy, the chances are any insurance company would give him over as a hopeless risk. I drew a deep sigh of relief, and then for the first time became conscious of a soft hand laid on my forehead.

Eboli was there beside me, her fair face shining with a light from beyond the earth. Beautiful always, that supreme hour of self-conquest had so transfigured her that I doubted whether I were not dead after all and she a heavenly angel bending over me.

"You here?" I asked in bewilderment. "Why didn't you run while I was keeping the passage open? You could have gotten away."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Ezra, say that again."

"What?"

"That I might have run—for I might. There was time, a full pistol-crack of time to decide in. All my life and hopes were pulling me and the full, fine years of youth ahead. I even started—there is no heroism in a body's heels."

"But you are here."

"The situation breathed breaths into me. What are the years of youth and the possibility of living them? I have cast them away in contempt a hundred nights running in the Antigone revival. One surge of a big, splendid, real peril, and I struggled with it, breasted it, over-topped it equal to the best. I was great too, just then, like you, with infinite capacity for love and sacrifice. I turned and took my stand beside you, grand as Medea, or rather like Cleopatra, perhaps, where she scorns safety at the price it is offered. Yes, more like Cleopatra. There was the same handwave and the ashy, set pallor of resolution. I wish you could have seen me turn."

"But why—why?" I gripped her wrists, seeking in a frenzy to wrest a confession of love from her.

"Because of you. You blurred the world, stars, sky, all the universe. I saw you, only you, and stayed—when I knew in my heart it was death I stayed for."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Her plight sobered me. 'Twas serious enough, though I realized that she could always in the issue purchase safety with that wretched code.

"The Lord forgive me, child, for swelling in that fashion if it has led you into this. You should have run. It was a foolish act—staying."

"It was. Rather like one of yours. What is the substance of folly? that it never reckons for its own advantage; and of heroism? that it is a magnificent spendthrift of life, trading off years of peace and happiness for uncalled for miseries, with sundry ecstatic moments, perhaps, before the pains take hold. 'Tis a bad bargain, a desperately bad bargain, the worst I ever made. We are arrant simpletons, both of us, and gorgeously heroic."

"You stayed—why? Was it mere generosity or—but it must have been generosity. A woman wouldn't care so much for me."

"'Twas because I loved you, loved you—from the first and always. I love you to the scope of a thousand dramas."

She was in a wonderful exhilaration over it. She clasped my head, shutting off my breath in her neck frills till I had none left to reciprocate with. As she kissed my hair and ear-tips, and, failing them my chains, talking in broken gasps the while of "godlike ecstasies" and other inconceivables, I feared lest she was



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

regarding me as a Macbeth or something of that sort and not a plain man at all.

"Will you marry me then?" I asked, getting down to the practical.

"Marry you?" She spoke dazedly, as if waking out of a dream. "And live my life out in dull Marietta or perhaps on a farm or in a cabin back in the dreary woods, wherever it might please you to set the residence?"

"Marry me, madam, and live in Marietta or on a farm or in the woods, wherever it pleases me to set the residence," I repeated mercifully. Not that I had the slightest notion of subjecting her to frontier hardships, but I wanted to make her, if I could, realize the seriousness of what she was saying.

But she only put her hands out with a gentle grace born of long practice in acting fine scenes.

"You are my master. Order it as you will. Shall it be the cabin in the forest depths? Please let us have it be the cabin for you always wanted to go pioneering. I will help, too, cooking and cleaning and hoeing the corn while you chop and clear. You will let me prove how I love you by hoeing the corn-patch, won't you? 'Twill make me ugly in a year or two, sunstreaking my hair and running ugly seams in my neck, but no matter. My beauty is all I have to offer you, and you shall see how generous I can be of that. Yes, I shall

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

hoe and scrub and be your woman, as the woodsmen put it; which is to say, a something less than you, living on your bounty and earning by the labor of my hands my shelter and the right to love you. So we'll go on, gloriously happy, seeing no one from years end to years end but each other, till some day a tree crashes on us, or the Indians— In a wilderness, it is more likely to be Indians, isn't it?"

She seemed so happy, imagining out horrors for us to suffer, that I let her burn the cabin and tomahawk herself and me, never telling her of the Pittsburg gowns and jewelry and cosmetics I was meaning her to have.

An ominous crackling overhead sobered her. Her face grew pallid, as if overcast by the shadow of the tomb.

"Listen to me, planning for life when it 'tis death that faces us."

"Not so bad," I argued. "If Miller had meant to murder us he had opportunity above."

"He didn't mean to. There are worse men than Miller—this wicked landlord, for instance, in whose charge we have been placed. He is afraid we may be rescued and that you'll keep your vow to kill him."

"No one knows we are here but Jared and he, I fear, is in a worse plight."

"Do you know—I am full of fancies to-night, but it sounded strangely like Jared's voice when he gave me the pistol and bade me

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

run. The man was the same figure too—but 'twas only my whim."

"Sure, he handed you a pistol. I saw him. Is that smoke?"

"Don't sniff. It is nothing. The landlord was paid, nobly, to keep you here till the expedition started, then to set you free—also, by any means, all means, to wrest my secrets out of me. But he will never do it."

"Why?"

"Because he is afraid to let you live. You frightened him so dreadfully after your other adventure here."

"I mean—get your secrets," for I could understand his sentiments toward me well enough to know that if matters were as she said, my plight was hopeless.

"I shot with my pistol five times up above there, defending you," Eboli said. "The other bullet, I warned the landlord, was for him if he entered this cellar or tried to separate us. He has bungled Miller's orders sadly in my case; he would like to bungle them still more in yours. If the tavern should burn—*don't* mind that smoke—your death would look to be an accident. I overheard a something—"

"And you?" I cried out hoarsely, for I understood the crackling now and the growing warmth of the cellar. "Lord Jesus, woman, must you die too?"

"It is not so much to die. One yank, and

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

we are loose from life forever. Do you think that roaring is the fire? 'Tis the world buzzing off into the distance and leaving us behind. We are not on it. 'Twill never concern us again. Kiss me, Ezra. You and I are all there is, the one reality. Don't mind me. I am strong now."

I laid my head on hers in very misery for her. Then, through the smoke, I heard the landlord's voice calling Eboli to come out now before it was too late. I looked to her for an explanation, comprehending at last that her sacrifice was voluntary and that it lay within her power to take freedom yet.

"Didn't I tell you?" she said dully. "'Twas part of his plan. He thought that when the heat came I'd be quick to leave you. How strange for any one to think that I could leave you!"

"Go, go," I gasped, flinging her from me.

She crept back, already half suffocated.

"Did I run or stay?—and I knew—I knew—Desdemona herself couldn't have outdone that. Let me stay with you—to the end—through the smoke and the after darkness. It's the one moment of my life—a moment worth living for, worth dying for."

What followed? A kiss of consecration, a second that lasted hours. Then—down into the furnace some one rushed. With a mighty iron and the force of his will, I think it was

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

the latter mainly, for he had never my strength physically, he wrenched loose the staple that held me. Catching Eboli in his arms, he forced the way back through a breath of purgatory into the sweet, free air. It was Jared.

Where he had been, how he came there at that moment, he vouchsafed no explanation. I noticed a deep bruise underneath his left eye just where I'd knocked the man in camlet, by which I judged that Jared, too, had been in a quarrel. He was busy working over Eboli and reviving her.

"Regard my advice hereafter, miss, and keep at home," he said when the light of comprehension returned to her eyes. "Faith, you should mind me as you would your mother for I have brought you to life this moment as surely as she did twenty years ago."

But Eboli only pushed him away, passionately, angrily, and fell to sobbing as if in utter weariness of the new existence he had given her.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

### CHAPTER XXI

ON THE morning after the Violet in the Dell was burned, I rose stiff and sore, but my heart was happy and my hopes were high. Eboli was mine. I was living to claim her. At the moment of death, Fate had rescued me that I might live to claim her.

Along with this inward glee and, perhaps, in fair payment for it, I suffered more than my customary share of external annoyances. Reverend Cutler left us that morning for a sojourn at his son, Ephraim's. Going into the granary soon after his departure, I found the foremost of the Spanish sacks opened, the one I had showed to O'Mallory and neglected to put back. The layer of corn was gone from the top, and on questioning Ancy Ann I learned that she had innocently fed it to the minister's horse.

"There was no corn in the stable, so shiftless a brother have I; so I untied a sack in the granary and scooped out a measure full. What difference, as long as the beast was fed?"

And indeed though I had fears, all seemed to be right.



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

From the granary, I went to the smoke-house to carry Phil Nolan his morning meal. I scrutinized his face carefully as I thrust in the platter but it bore no trace of the blow I had given him on the high stoop of the Violet the evening before. Evidently, though his cheek had felt firm enough under my fist, he was not sufficiently mortal to take bodily hurts. At least, so I argued it.

In the office I found Jared nursing his own bruised visage. He was downcast and vexed most unreasonably, as I thought, with me.

"It would all have gone so well, and I would have been this moment on the way to Chillicothe if only you had obeyed orders. 'Twas the unluckiest act of your life, rushing in as you did where you were not wanted. It is the next most unlucky thing that you burned the Burr warrant. We cannot get Eboli's signal code or Phil's paper or anything worth having without a fresh order from Aaron Burr himself."

"Oh, we will get Eboli's signal code," I said easily. In our new relations, my country being hers, she would surely, I considered, hand me over her code upon request.

"And, besides, what did I do?" I added. "Took the papers from that wretched Nolan, who had no business with them, and here you are as angry with me as if it were yourself I had bowled off the stoop and robbed."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"If I ever convince you that induction is not your forte, perhaps you will cease trying to reason. Till then— You have spoiled the best part of my stratagem. There is nothing for us now but one last desperate move that I have been saving for a final crisis."

For a week or so following, Jared continued dispirited. All his spare moments were spent with O'Mallory, and I had no doubt he was preparing for the final desperate crisis he had spoken of.

The man in camlet was not so often at large now, though he still held occasional trysts with Thankful. My own love affair remained stationary. Eboli was sober and solemn, keeping much in her room and never, for some reason or other, giving me opportunity for a private talk.

And now for that eventful day of December ninth.

There was a meeting of Vigilants appointed for the morning to consider ways of dealing with the man in the camlet cloak. Jared had sought ineffectually for a postponement for he owned to me that he feared the men might resort to too stringent measures. In my vexation, I doubted if any measures could be too stringent.

Before the meeting, Jared took me a little more into his confidence.

"Ezra," he said, "we cannot get the 'en-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

closed paper' from Nolan for we have nothing now to give him in exchange, inasmuch as you saw fit to burn the Burr warrant. Our one hope, therefore, of quietly clearing ourselves in Governor Tiffin's eyes by exposing General Wilkinson's treachery, is past. You remember O'Mallory expected some boats and reinforcements from up river? Well, a runner has arrived with messages to Blennerhassett. They are on the way, four of them, and will reach Marietta to-morrow, probably. Blennerhassett expects to elude us, and with them and O'Mallory's boats and supplies, proceed South."

"What is the use keeping guard on the Island," I complained, "if messages slip in and out as easily as does Nolan? Of course they must slip in and out when you have reinstated Miller to patrol duty."

"If you understood, you would not grumble about reinstating Miller. I was compelled to patch up a truce with him the night we captured the gold, a *modus vivendi*, if you remember. He made certain stipulations, this being one, which I had to yield or force a premature crisis. Of course," he added, looking me squarely in the face, "there is no use whatever keeping guard on the Island with him on the patrol—except for the looks of it before the Vigilants."

"You don't mean that you are conniving with the conspirators?"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"It is, and has been a contest of wits with the odds, however, still on me. I am trying now, since my other resources have failed, to convince Miller that I have finally cast in my fortunes with Burr."

"You will end by convincing me. How do you know of these messages to Blennerhassett? Not from Miller?"

"Hardly. He never tells anything, but he watches me like an Argus. Don't ask how. That I do know is sufficient."

"Sufficient truly; for, knowing it, the Vigilants can seize the boats, clean out the warehouse, and arrest Blennerhassett," I ventured to suggest.

"Miller wants the expedition to start. If we incite the Vigilants to such action, he will point to the gold; and we will be arrested instead of Blennerhassett. Then while we are under suspicion in jail, away goes the expedition all triumphant, Eboli and her signal code with it. The Mississippi posts surrender to it. It unites with Wilkinson and the English fleet; and the empire is a reality."

"We must not suffer it. This shall never be an empire," I said decisively with a handsome glow.

And then the glow faded. It is inspiring to lay down the law thus to fate and announce the limits to what one will tolerate; but a consideration of means and practicalities generally

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

discourages such heroics. Then the thinkers come in—when there are any at hand. For 'tis said there are a million fighters to a single general, and indeed I do know that brute courage, like mine, has ever been the tool of wit. Strong heads are so much rarer than strong hearts.

"What are we to do about it?" I asked weakly.

"I think the surest, in fact the only way left us now is to get O'Mallory's boats and men, load up the guns and ammunition from the Island, and run off with them; take them down river ourselves, this night, before Burr and Blennerhassett have a chance, or the reinforcements arrive from the East. I have been working with O'Mallory to this end. He is expecting to take me for a leader instead of Burr, to give Aaron the cut sinister, and make a miniature Napoleon and permanent emperor out of—your servant. If we wait for the reinforcements from up river, they mightn't agree to this. By refusing obedience to me they would unsettle O'Mallory's men and, worst of all, would aggravate Miller's suspicion that I am really for the United States, however I may pretend to espouse Burr's cause—which to Miller, I do of late pretend."

"What are we to do when we get down the river?" I asked, little pleased with this snarl of motives.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Ah, you would think me a lunatic—as perhaps I am. The plan is so mad that it may succeed from its very madness "

These words, spoken rather to himself, did little toward my reassurance.

"By stealing these boats and stores and running away in that fashion, we will surely get ourselves branded as traitors."

"Exactly—if the plan should fail. But fail or not, we shall circumvent Burr, which is our first aim. We can save ourselves easily enough by doing nothing and letting him succeed. But it is our country first. I have thought it all out, and I doubt you have not. Will you trust to me, go along and make a trial of this crazy plan of mine?"

So accustomed was I to trooping unquestioningly after him, I scarcely realized there was any other way. I forgot Thankful, Ancy Ann, Eboli, the *Sentinel*; and swore to follow, as I always had, wherever he might lead. I had an established business and a pleasant home; Burr's success could work little harm to me for the *Sentinel* would circulate as widely in an empire as in a republic; but the notion of saving the country at the possible expense of our own lives and honor, got quite into my blood. To a stupid fellow like me, such idealities appeal. Possibly as Ancy Ann says, it is because I know no better and have not the prudence to consider my own interests.



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

At the meeting of Vigilants, the one subject discussed was Philip Nolan. Jared insisted that in his capture no violence was to be used. Once in our power, he could be dealt with legally. There was not sufficient evidence against him at present to justify severities.

"Take him by strategy," he urged, and a fair trial afterward."

"Take a bird by salting its tail!" growled a backwoodsman. "I am for shooting him."

"Shoot a ghost—a dead man!" added I contemptuously, as my contribution to the talk.

Now this seemed to put an idea into their heads. They looked from one to another, and finally the backwoodsman, learned as we all were in those days in the ways of black-art practices, spoke:

"His escapes from us do smack of witchcraft. Certain it is for the interest of all honest folk that dead man or live man, he be shot."

This cool and earnest proposition mightily alarmed Frank Miller.

"Witches are women," he said as one scoffing. "We have no warrant for this fellow's death; nor, if he be a spirit as you seem to agree, can he be killed."

"Be the guise man, beast, or ghost," retorted the backwoodsman, "a silver bullet will reach the witch underneath."

The Vigilants seized upon this expedient. Adoniram Daniels told of the weasel that took

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

a powerful lot of chickens a five-year back. A silver bullet was fired at it, the weasel disappeared, and next day an old hag was found dead, somewhere up state.

Stories like this were retold with various ornamentations. For me, I approved the silver bullet as man's only defense against the beings of the air. No one of experience scoffs at witchcraft, and sure, had he as many lives as Plutarch, such a measure would end them all.

Jared, too, agreed. He had the wisdom always to fall in with, when he could not change the temper of the people. He even volunteered to fire the shot, saying that he had a silver bullet left over from his last witch hunt. The backwoodsman, who was of a bloody mind and had that spring bought a new musket because his old one would hold no more notches, disputed the privilege, as he, too, had a half dozen silver bullets. He argued that Jared might not chance to see the man in camlet, and therefore announced his own intention of lying in wait at another part of the Island. This course the Vigilants vigorously approved, Jared's objections being overruled as a selfish attempt to hog the honor. As the arrangements finally stood, Jared was to take up his post in a deserted cabin on the North Shore of the Island, while the backwoodsman hovered about the East Point.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

After adjournment, Frank Miller lingered:

"If anything happens to Nolan, mind, you will pay for it," he said, his voice as threatening as his words.

"Sure, I have plenty of gold to pay with," Jared answered airily. "Nolan is taking advantage of his privilege of escaping us rather much, don't you think? Well, I was not for such extreme measures but the others overruled me."

When we had parted with Miller, Jared took me down to the warehouse for a word with O'Mallory. He repeated what he had already told me about the up-river reinforcements, and explained the necessity for starting before the new recruits should lead the old ones to dally along with Burr, instead of following with a conquering rush after himself.

"Haste is the thing, haste and decision," the Irishman agreed. "Both of which Burr lacks in a crisis, and Blennerhassett never had. Saints! it is better to wear a bungled garment than die naked while it is making. 'Jared Dalrymple, Emperor, I—M—P,' like Bonaparte. Won't it have a foine look stamped on a coin? Ah, 'tis the broth of an emperor ye'll be. Start to-night at twelve? Yes, yes, darlint. I'll be up to yer place about ten to load the gold. Oh, mind yer talk now—of course we are going to take the gold. Why that's the main hold ye've got on me and me men. Ye'll

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

never leave it here, after all the tales I've told about that gold. I'll be around with a boat, come ten to-night."

After some further pregnant talk, we parted with O'Mallory.

"Jared," I said, "I would like immensely to know where we are going."

"Going? We may be going to stay right here in Marietta, unless I can reconcile matters. Miller won't let us carry off the money, and it bids fair to take some close shots getting O'Mallory to start without it. Still I am not so bad at close shots. How would this do? When O'Mallory begins to move the money, Miller will know of it and protest. We will tell him that the expedition starts South to-night—I think he knows nothing of the up-river reinforcements. The chances are, he'll help us off in exchange for the gold. We need his connivance, too, removing the musketry and cannon—they have one cannon—from the island."

"But O'Mallory?"

"He knows Miller to be a commissioned United States officer. We will let him think Miller has confiscated the gold in the Government's behalf and will deal summarily with us unless we hurry South."

"But that leaves Miller with the money," I objected.

"Which can't well be prevented. Miller would hand us and it over to the Government



And shot out into midstream.  
(272)





## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

before he would let us take it. You are not growing avaricious?"

"Of course not," I answered annoyed—the bantering was so unseemly, as if I wasn't anxious to be shut of the nasty stuff; "but I didn't want Wilkinson to have that money."

### CHAPTER XXII

RETURNING from O'Mallory's, as we neared our own neighborhood, Jared plucked my arm dismayed.

"What is that? Pickets around our place!"

Indeed it was, and a winded feeling it does give one to find one's home policed, making an honest man take counsel with himself whether he could inadvertently have been a rogue. Honest men, I believe, are more sensitive on these points than blackguards.

The head watchman—they were our own Vigilants—advanced and explained most civilly that they were posted by Governor Tiffin himself, who had unexpectedly arrived and was that moment in the *Sentinel* office. He had, it seemed for some reason, recalled Jared's warrants and given temporary command of the situation to Colonel Russel, till Major-general Buell should arrive with militia on the morrow.

"Your Excellency, what does it mean?"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Why are you here?" Jared stammered, much disconcerted, when we entered the office.

"I am here to have you clear yourself. Jared, there is no man's loyalty I want to believe in more earnestly than yours. The Spanish gold was lost sight of at Marietta and your soldiers, led by you, captured only a load of corn. You allow whether purposely or not, the man in the camlet cloak to roam at will. Colonel Russel, an officer of the utmost reliability, suspects you. All these things seemed to one knowing you as I did, not worth considering. But here is the confirmation which would make it criminal, in view of the public danger, for me to ignore them."

He took from his pocket and laid upon the table a half dozen golden Mexican coins.

"Reverend Manasseh Cutler spent a night with you recently; his horse was fed in your stable. In the morning he found these in the manger. Is gold so plenty here that it is fed to horses—gold of such a stamp? Word was sent me and I came direct."

"'Twas Ancy Ann," I blundered. "She fed his horse from the wrong sack."

At this, the Governor demanded to see our granary. Jared, seeking to gain something by frankness, explained how the gold was saddled onto me by Nolan and Miller. In the granary, when we had seen the gold and counted the sacks, he added:

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Miller will dispute me and so will Nolan, but it is the Lord's truth I am speaking. Your Excellency, what do you mean to do?"

The sternness of the man before us remained unbroken. The tone of his answer was a rebuke to Jared's question, leaving as it did the inference that it was a mere act of grace to make any answer to a forsworn traitor.

"Give you under arrest; place the situation, as indeed I have already done, in Colonel Russel's hands till the arrival of General Buell; and confiscate this."

"And the expedition down the Mississippi!" Jared cried in distress. "It will start tomorrow. Miller will do nothing to stop it. Wilkinson will do nothing to stop it. We shall have an empire yet, all because you will not believe."

"Since the capture of the corn, there is no longer an iota of suspicion against General Wilkinson."

Then with a further extension of grace:

"I have sent for Colonel Russel. When he comes, I will give this and you into his charge. I can trust him. There is no further need of my presence, so I am to address a religious meeting up the river. A true servant of the Lord should devote every idle moment to garnering in the Lord's vineyard."

His Excellency, I should explain, in addition to his other vocations, was an ardent preacher of the Methodist faith and had gar-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

nered more sheaves in those idle moments than had Reverend Manasseh Cutler in the course of steady business.

"Stay, Your Excellency, I am innocent. I must prove it. I can only swear to it now; give me opportunity to prove it. Do me this favor in memory of the time I helped to save Chillicothe from the Indians. I beg you to say nothing to-day to the people of finding this. Leave our reputations clear for this one day—and when you return to-night come here and I shall prove you our innocence."

I had never seen Jared so earnest before and the Governor was impressed.

"Certainly, I will do so much," and in view of Jared's confidence he promised to instruct Miller to make our arrest as little apparent as possible, allowing us the utmost liberty consistent with the public safety.

We left the granary. Near the smoke-house Miller joined us. With the subservience of a true soldier, he received the Governor's instructions. The Governor made no mention of finding the gold, merely bidding him guard the granary. Miller quietly assented, saying that he would take command of the situation as directed, that he was glad the treason was finally frustrated, and that he would do his utmost to vindicate the General from the accusations of malicious tongues, by ferreting out all persons connected with it.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

When we were back in the *Sentinel* office and the Governor was gone, Jared said:

"Do you wish to talk, Mr. Miller? The situation will bear discussing."

"Governor Tiffin then has found the gold?" The questioner seemed to have more at stake here than I had supposed.

"He has. It only remains for you, therefore, to deny all complicity in it, curry favor with the powers that be, and leave Ezra and me to our fate—unless, perchance, you would like to save that gold."

"Save the gold—how?"

"The General is cleared, it seems, in the eyes of the Government. Empire or republic, he will continue to be an officer of the greatest influence. Will he be likely to use this great influence to promote, or to retard the career of Colonel Russel, who has managed to lose him some quarter of a million dollars? Soul of my body, I think there are three wrecks here instead of two, and that Colonel Russel may wave adieu to fortune as well as Ezra and myself."

"Well?" The officer's face showed pallid as he leaned forward in his eagerness.

"Colonel Russel," Jared drawled on leisurely, "being weary of fighting, has long made big eyes at a position in the War Department. Empire or republic, there is always a War Department. The position seemed to reciprocate. It was 'Whistle and I'll come to you, my lad.'"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

But—only in case this gold was safely delivered to Wilkinson at Orleans.”

“If you have anything to say, man, say it.”

“Only this, that there is a plan by which you can deliver the gold, safe as you would wish. You who are so good at plans are in need of mine?”

“Give it to us, then, before the Governor returns.”

“The Governor does not return till late to-night. He gives me so much time to prove my innocence. And do you know, I have a fancy to prove my innocence by you? I extricate you from your difficulties; you extricate me from mine.”

“But how?”

“A fair proposition—all things considered, a generous one. I might, you know, have grown attached to this gold and asked a part of it for storage. I might also stipulate for a desk in the War Department, for a place as Premier of the Empire, or Governor of Texas if we turn out a Spanish province. Besides, there would be Ezra to provide for.”

“The Lord forbid,” I interposed; “I want nothing.”

“The point is this,” Jared continued. “You have forced me in with Burr. O’Mallory, his boats, and men, Ezra and myself included, wish to start South to-night. To-night the expedition must go, if at all, while you are in charge



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

here. General Buell, on arriving, will confiscate the warehouse stores."

"General Buell will not be here till to-morrow evening, and the expedition can go quite as well without you as with you."

"But the gold cannot. If we start to-night, O'Mallory will load it up on one of the boats and deliver it to you. Send it down to the General at Orleans, or do with it what you choose."

"I will take it to Orleans myself. I can get leave here on a plea of going South to warn the General of Burr's coming."

"Your pardon," objected Jared. "But warning the General—that was to be my mission."

Miller looked doubtful.

"I thought, when you said you had joined with Burr, that you were—oh, I will not say lying, Mr. Dalrymple, since there is no time to duel over it, but that you mistook your own mind."

"On the contrary, I have simply learned caution from observing your methods. I strive to emulate yourself and play on both sides, with nothing staked and all to gain."

"I want to inveigle Governor Tiffin into giving me a commission to hurry South in the Government's behalf and warn Wilkinson to put the river posts on the defense against Burr. Such a warrant would get me past any loyal militia; it would save me, in case Burr failed,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

and it would be to your interest, for I can manage to hatch up accidents so that Wilkinson doesn't get the warning till we find what promise of success Burr has. Ohio is a move ahead of the United States in this matter, and if Tiffin sends me, he will not send a more reliable agent."

"And what security have I that you will not live up to your warrant and act for the United States instead of Burr?"

"None at all—except what you conceive to be my interest. But you get the boats South before Buell comes, which you might or might not otherwise; and you have the gold, which you would certainly lose."

"True, but how get Tiffin to appoint you his messenger?"

"I have been extricating you this while; it is now your turn. You are to clear me in his eyes. He believes implicitly in you, and it might be done after this fashion. Say you find that you and I have both been working to good ends though at cross purposes. Corroborate my story concerning the way the Spanish gold was left here. Declare that you only meant to keep it from escaping and thought, while its presence was kept secret, you could better trace the people for whom it was intended. Say that, so far as I have dallied with the traitors, I have done so only to confound them."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"I may say all this—will the Governor believe? Will he not rather begin to doubt me as well as yourself?"

"Possibly. Therefore, when we capture the camlet cloak to-night, I have a plan for its capture: let us arrange to have a message in its pocket from Blennerhassett, supposedly to Burr, saying that he still trusts Wilkinson and distrusts Jared Dalrymple. The latter words will confirm what you tell, while his belief in Wilkinson would count for nothing in view of his well known thickheadedness—and it explains my persistent suspicions of the General."

"Very well, but though we can write the message and capture it, how procure Blennerhassett's seal, without which Tiffin will know it fraudulent?"

"From Blennerhassett himself. O'Mallory will take us to his palace. Any child can manage Blennerhassett."

There was a silence; then Miller spoke.

"We seem, theoretically, to be handsomely extricated, both of us. But Tiffin knows the gold is here under my guardianship. Tomorrow, when he finds it gone, I shall lose character in his eyes; and you, having been cleared mainly by my word, will also lose character. Consequently, our hold is gone on one of the three sides we are playing. Empire and Spanish province will still be left us, but

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

the republic's victory would be our ruin. We might plan for an attack by O'Mallory on the granary, do you think?—which would overpower us, carry off the gold, me its guard, and you my prisoner, and take us all South, forcibly.”

“Very fine, only I decline to go South in your company because you know that I know of Wilkinson's purposed treachery to Burr; and you mean, if you can, to warn him against me. If you are a part of O'Mallory's cargo, I balk. For the rest, do with the gold what you please, and explain its absence, afterward, how you please. I should suggest this. The Governor bade you make my captivity light. You therefore removed most of the guards. Meanwhile, a plausible some one bribed the others and carried off the gold.”

“In short, manufacture a scapegoat? Well, there is Nolan.”

“I thought,” said Jared, “that you would presently arrive at Nolan. We will have to cut it rather fine though, getting Nolan to consent. I imagine he has been a trifle suspicious all along that if a crash came, you and the General meant to creep out unharmed at his expense. If so, your talk just now with the Governor within his hearing will do little to reassure him. I fear you will find Nolan difficult.”

“He is a plausible scapegoat—decidedly, and

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

would have a presumptive interest. You think he is difficult?" Miller interrogated.

"Rather. I judge he will show a disposition to wash his hands of all of us. But we can take him South. Give him charge of the gold, if you choose, since Wilkinson considers him trusty. At Orleans he can not contradict you."

"It is not only that, Mr. Dalrymple. In that cipher message about the seed corn there was no 'enclosed paper'; but I know one was sent. I must see Nolan."

Jared smiled. "And you think Nolan abstracted it? Wilkinson's two agents suspicious of each other! But before you see Nolan—we made a bargain about him the morning of his capture. You consider that I have kept my part of it?"

"Certainly. You agreed to make him only a nominal prisoner, releasing him whenever he requested; and he has been at large nigh every day since."

"Jared Dalrymple," I cried, "you let him out! you!"

"Don't box my ears, Ezra."

"You told me it was Eboli who did it, or Thankful, or Miller."

"Oh, no. I said it was not Thankful nor Miller and only assumed it was Eboli."

"You let me think him a ghost."

"Because I couldn't dissuade you."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"You made me guard him night and day, and all the while it was a jest. Oh, Jared, you might at least have told me."

"And forthwith your honest face would let all Marietta into the secret."

But Miller was interested this while in his own difficulties.

"I must see Nolan. Will you come along?"

As he advanced rather ahead of us, Jared said to me:

"There are other things I would tell you, Ezra, if it wasn't for that face of yours. Trust me a little longer, won't you?—yet a little longer?"

I did not say whether I would or not. I meant to trust him, of course, but I deliberately kept my own counsel about it.

## CHAPTER XXIII

As we unlocked the prison door and entered, Nolan advanced to meet us with a very bad grace. Ignoring Jared and me he turned wrathfully on Miller.

"So? His Excellency does not accompany you? After your conversation with him just outside, I expected you to hand me over to him as proof of your zeal."



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Wait, Phil. The Governor's coming was inadvertant —"

"Precious inadvertance. You told me if I would get myself and the gold quartered on Jared Dalrymple, the solution of our difficulty would be found. I wait cooped up here, unsuspecting and patient, only to learn that you have brought the Governor down and propose, probably, to clear yourself by delivering up me."

"Phil —"

"It is the old story. At the last moment Wilkinson's nerve fails him and he goes back to his allegiance at the expense of every one else. But it is not for nothing that I know him. This time I have secured myself; and Jim Wilkinson will need a big stock of caution to pull his loyalty through unscathed."

"That 'enclosed paper,'" Miller began in alarm, but Nolan took him up.

"I have it—yes. A list of posts and men to be surrendered, signed by General Jim W. himself. I took it out, resealed the packet, and held it for just such an emergency. Three times now everything has been in readiness to dismember the United States, and every time Wilkinson has weakened and withdrawn. But he won't play coward again. We go on with the conspiracy, or it is he who will be in a hole."

"Where is the paper?"

"Where I can get it. Save your questions. No further word do I pass with the man who

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

promised me instant relief and then left me here, hoping against hope, this mortal time, while opportunity slipped by."

"There is no use making imaginary charges or complaining of being a prisoner. You went free whenever you chose."

"That," said Nolan, with the air of combatting an obvious absurdity, "is a damned lie."

Truly he was difficult.

"You wore the camlet cloak and came and went to the Island. 'Tis I waited on your actions till opportunity passed."

"All that, I say, is a damned lie."

"You have eluded the Vigilants—I have helped you do it. I conferred with you myself in O'Mallory's warehouse. You have crossed the river in a canoe. You have been meeting a lady—"

"Lies, da— The devil! What's that?"

A flash lighted the corner of the smoke-house. It was Eboli's white diamond set in a bracelet and lying in Jared's hand.

"The conspiracy is going on, Phil, despite Mr. Miller, and this is the proof of it," Jared said. "Don't be so free with your denials. It wasn't in the bargain to that extent. You know the plan you and I have arranged since you have been locked up."

"You and I?" One would have said he'd never seen Jared before. Then after a ques-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

tioning glance and a mysterious juggling of looks between the two, Nolan added:

"Well, then—about our plan—yours and mine—that we fixed up since my incarceration."

"O'Mallory's boats are going South to-night, we, but not Miller, with them. You will work with us, and at Orleans give the English emissary that 'enclosed paper' in return for her code of signals to the fleet?"

"I will—all I am asking is a chance to round out this conspiracy. I am with that diamond and you—since you possess it."

Miller was relieved by this concession, which he followed up and welded into a promise. If the English emissary had the paper, it would not be likely to get into the hands of the United States.

When Miller and I left the smoke-house, Nolan detained Jared, and as I lingered outside to turn the key I distinctly heard him say:

"Mr. Dalrymple, I am no spoilsport; but I should like to know what in thunder this all means. You know I haven't seen you since my capture or been once outside this cursed hole."

Jared silenced him with a word about Burr, adding that all was well, only the dilemma had gotten a new crimp in its horn.

Well, I did not tell Jared that I heard this, but cultivated a little reticence on my own account. Miller immediately withdrew the guards about our place, giving us our liberty.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

When O'Mallory came up to consider the most feasible means of loading the gold, Jared explained to him Tiffin's discovery of it and our arrangement with Miller. To my surprise, O'Mallory agreed to give Miller the gold so readily that I wondered if he, too, had a plan of his own inside the general one. He approved also Jared's being sent South as Governor Tiffin's official messenger; and consented to accompany Miller and us, as our sponsor, to the Island that night and prevail on Blennerhassett to write the pretended message to Burr.

"He is a good lad, Blennerhassett. Ye'll not be afther getting him into anny difficulty? He can be ambassador to St. James' from our empire as well as Burr's. That is the post he wants, and sure, 'tis no more than he deserves, when he bankrupts himself buying this very fleet ye are running off with."

Jared promised Blennerhassett an embassy, and the two fell to talking so earnestly about the new empire and the many details necessary to secure it, I wondered if it were possible that Jared's seriousness was not all affectation. I tried to put myself in his place, and think, were I a brilliant man, with an emperor's regalia at hand and the grace to wear it becomingly, whether or no I would put on the gorgeous trumpery. Evidently I did not imagine it out properly for it had no allurements. Great minds, however, they tell me, are wont to

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

use ambition as an end in itself and not a mere means to happiness. Of myself, I know nothing about it. My attempt on that occasion to climb to the mountain-top, and see how the kingdoms of the earth would look spread out beneath me, was a failure. But Jared was up there beholding them; and knowing that there are people who care to be kings, I doubted of the outcome.

O'Mallory had heard of the Vigilants' action regarding Nolan, and he left us with some final chuckles over the idea of Jared's shooting himself with a silver bullet.

Thankful came dawdling down to the pigsty after me that noon where I was busy with the midday feeding. She was as palely sentimental as a schoolgirl who has been dieting on tea-grounds.

"Ezra," she began with a pathetic tremulo that she had caught from Eboli, "would you mind greatly—that is, what would you do if—if I should jilt you?"

"I'll buy you a silk gown with seven ruffles, that I will, missy, and glad of the opportunity. What are you pouting for? Isn't that a handsome enough inducement?"

"If you had any courtesy, you'd be sorry and say sweet things about how I am wrecking your life."

"But you are not wrecking it—not if you let me loose from our betrothal, that is. Frocks

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

are more useful than sighs, as I should suppose any girl would realize."

"The frock is very well. I will take the frock anyway and mind, you promised it. How many ruffles, did you say?"

"Seven; but we will make it ten and some gold beads, besides, if you will only let go of Nolan and jilt me for Jared. This last is straitly on condition that Jared is the man. Otherwise, seven ruffles and no beads."

"I have thought of taking Jared, only—he is like you, not specially zealous for me."

At this, I talked of Jared's affection for her in a glowing fashion that would have done credit to himself. I dilated on his beauty, and insisted that he could, if he but set about it, outdo Nolan himself at artistic lovemaking for, as I reminded her, in the old days Jared had more sweethearts than any man in the service, and surely must have acquired long since a fine technique at turning compliments and causing blushes.

She seemed impressed and promised, if I was sure he loved her, to give him a trial before accepting Nolan. However, she refused to forego further trysts with the man in camlet.

"I must get Eboli's diamond from him first. She let me wear it, and he took it, promising to return it at our next meeting. She is dreadfully worried over it."



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

She was much relieved when I told her that Nolan no longer had it but Jared himself.

"Am I jilted then?" I asked when our talk was over.

"Yes; but we needn't mention it to mommy."

"Who is going to mention it to her?" I exclaimed in a fright. "I only wanted to know for my own peace. There will be no frock forthcoming unless I am surely jilted."

Thankful had returned to the house and I was pouring the slop into the trough for Speckleback and her family when Eboli touched my sleeve.

"Sit down, Ezra. I want a few words with you. We will scurry as quickly as possible through a disagreeable conversation."

She seated herself on a stump and motioned me to another, which I took reluctantly for it was, as she seemed to have calculated, just beyond arm's reach of her.

"Why talk at all?" I urged, alarmed by her ominous beginning. "Talk is for the people who can't understand each other without it. I love you and you love me. There is naught to add to that. I'm mistrustful of words. Seeing them innocently filed up in a spelling book, you'd never guess their evil possibilities; but the best of them, left to its devices, is liable to get spoiled through picking up bad associates."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

She ignored my objection.

"When we were last alone together, Ezra —"

"'Twas at the Violet in the Dell. You promised to stay with me if I died and to marry me if I lived. I am alive."

"That was at night when everything was excitement. It is daylight now; notice that it is daylight. The sun streams down upon us. I can see very plainly."

There was a silence.

"They are as sleek and promising a family of porkers as one would find in the whole town," I observed sociably for she was looking straight at the sty, and how could I know that the things she said she saw were not the things her eyes were pointed at.

"Pigs!" Her tone was irritable.

"They are mighty handy to have for a winter's eating," I argued. "Ham and hominy ought to be exalted by lovers equally with sweetly irrationalities for they provide the bal-  
last, the—the body of love, without which its more soulful part, I doubt, would get too feathery for one to keep a solid grip of. If you don't like my pigs, you might imagine them over into something else. They'd be gazelles in half a whiff, if you'd only try."

"Gazelles!"

And truly Speckleback was somewhat cumbersome for the metamorphosis. But I apologized, saying that as long as she was in for

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

making up things, it was just as cheap for her to come it strong.

"What is it that you see so plainly then?" I asked encouragingly.

"A woman, for one thing—oh, not a real one like me, but the woman of literature. The poets, dramatists, painters, all make use of her. She is varied outwardly, but, brown or fair, mild as sweet clover or sinister and vengeful, she is the one woman recognized by art—and she falls in love."

"They all do that—even you."

"She falls in love, which process proceeds on differing lines to an identical result. If she is bad, it makes her good. It drops honey on the virago's tongue. It lops off selfishness. With a presto and a breath she acquires the strength of mountains to suffer and die with her beloved. I thought the other night that I had grown into her at last."

I assured her, rapturously, that she had behaved in a way which would do credit to any angel that ever waved a wing, but she silenced me.

"It is not only death. If the executioner misses his entrance, she can live as blithely as she would have died; passing out all her hopes and prospects, and counting a crown and scepter well bartered for a hut in a desert with love thrown in. It is the chief of the thirty-six dramatic situations which, by tradition, in-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

clude every combination possible. It looks well, written; it sounds magnificent, spoken. And — she — never — retracts.”

“I could do all that for you with amazing blitheness. That isn’t specially characteristic of women.”

“Perhaps not; nor of love, either. We’ll make it broad; take a human being and opposite him set a great emotion going. In the antics of those two you have the whole thirty-six dramatic situations. Is there any faltering, any reckoning up of advantages and disadvantages on the part of the human being? Love, duty, religion, whatever it is, he follows heroically to the end the road whereto it leads him. And — he — never — retracts. Not if the end be long removed — for it is harder, Ezra, to be steadfast for years than for moments. You’re a soldier. You know how much more dreadful to contemplate is the wound that maims than the wound that kills.”

“Why, so it is, but none the less, ’tis cowardly to consider on the battle field the possible inconvenience of going through life with a leg missing.”

“And after the glory of the fight is over and the leg is gone, it is not even allowable to wish you had indulged in the ten minutes of cowardice which would have kept you whole.”

“By the code, madam, it is never allowable to be a coward. I’d be loth to part company

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

with any of my members, but, if they go in a good cause, I'll bid them godspeed and do no whimpering afterward, not even if 'twould bring them back. It's contemptible to set up for a hero, and then, next day, take back your heroism."

"It is," she mused. "That's what I was saying. I had a heroic impulse the other night, equal to the best. Yes, it is cowardly and contemptible to take it back."

"You're not going to," I said; but she was silent so long that I presently asked:

"Are you going to take it back? 'Twas the one moment of your life, you said. You loved me and could die with me. You won't—will you?—oh, you won't unsay it now."

"Cowardly and contemptible. Ezra, shall I tell you the prayer I said the morning after the Violet was burned. It ran like this. 'My God in Heaven—Thou hast given me back a worthless life. Thou hast deliberately set a stumbling block in my way; bade me prove myself; allowed me time, a long tempting time, to repudiate my heroism. If I had died nobly and self-sacrificingly, I might perhaps have stolen in surreptitiously among the Blest,—and so Thou hast given me back a worthless life and thus circumvented me. 'Twas cruel—like Thy merciless perfection.' That was the exordium."

"It is dreadful, woman, blasphemous! You didn't really say it?"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"I knelt and clasped my hands and said it. I was bitter that morning. Then I went on. 'My God in Heaven, since Thou hast thus entrapped me, help me to keep my pledge to Ezra and marry him. Help me to feign happiness, to make him think that his backwoods settlement is my ideal habitation, and to keep up the deception resolutely through the long, homesick, heartsick years. Teach me to wipe out the habits of the past that have a lien on my will and to make over in a day the character which has been all my life a-building. Thou knowest my weaknesses, that of my own power, unassisted by Thy grace, I cannot do this that I would. Blessed God, grant then my prayer. I ask it for Ezra's sake for he is a good man and deserving some consideration from Thee.'"

"What is your meaning?" I gasped. "'Twas makebelieve, and you don't love me?"

"Of my own power I cannot do what I would. That is the solemn truth. And God takes no notice of my petition nor vouchsafes aid."

"Don't you love me then? Won't you marry me?"

"I love you—but I don't love you well enough for that. That's the substance of it. 'Tis the only worthy, unselfish emotion I ever had; yet I can limit it, measure it off with a yardstick and find its end, add it up and de-



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

clare its sum. I love you to the extent of five figures, maybe, but not of six. It is contemptible, I am contemptible; but I cannot help it. Half-way emotions are ruled off the boards but they make the tragedies of life. For every saint in Heaven, there are a million poor recanters whose courage gave out, not through will but through weakness, when they caught sight of the rack. There's not the most groveling coward but would be a Richard Lion Heart, if he could."

The shallowness of her affection for me had been revealed so suddenly that it struck me dumb. In a sliding, shifting universe, the one thing that held firm was my old proposition that I loved her and still meant to go on loving her through all the centuries. My pledge was adamant however brittle hers might be.

"She is longing for finer things than I can give her," I said at length in explanation to myself.

"I suppose that is the secret of it. They are worthless. Gilt frescos and silk coverlets and rooms lined with mirrors—they are worthless in comparison with love—but I want them. A city's admiration and lorgnettes pointed my way and a fringe of macaronies dangling about me—hollow and empty all of it—but I want it. And yet I love you—that's the anomaly."

"And the purport is, we are to separate?"

"The purport is, everything should have

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

ended that night at the Violet in the Dell. I was great then, greater than I'll ever be again. All the years of Methusaleh could have added nothing to my stature that moment. It was my climax, my fifth act, and the stage-manager has anticapped it with a sixth. Imagine if Romeo's dagger had been mislaid, and Juliet thereby forced to live and marry the Count Paris and get old and fat and, in time, jest, perhaps, about her youthful infatuation! Some day I'll grow sick in my bed, and quiver and cringe at the approach of death and the nameless horrors back of it. I could have died divinely that night. It's part of genius to know when to die and go floating out on the flood of its achievements."

Of a sudden she was kneeling by me, sobbing softly, her forehead resting on my hands.

"Ezra, in your thoughts of me hereafter, will you remember how I stood beside you in the smoke, and let it all end there where it should have ended?"

Her distress was so intense that it cut short any manifestation of my own. With an affectation of cheerfulness, I patted her head and tried to reassure her.

"Lord, child, yes. If that is what you're wanting, I'll manage it somehow. Have it your way. I love you well enough to let it be as you wish. Don't cry. The will shall stand for the deed. I—I'd have like to marry you,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

but don't mind me or let my wishes seem a reproach to you. See, you are dead—as dead as Nolan. Does that satisfy you? And this talk doesn't count—and nothing counts but that one night in the cellar when—when you did love me.”

Here I'm afraid I gave way a trifle and added a tear of my own to a little puddle of them that she was making. We were silent for a long time, myself as sorrowful as if I were actually burying her and looking down that moment into her grave. Presently she said, with a cynical grimace:

“There are no red lights to turn on us, Ezra. I will go indoors.”

## CHAPTER XXIV

WHEN Eboli returned to the house I remained bowed and motionless. As she parted from me she took with her all warmth and geniality. A jagged world—cold sky—hard metallic sunbeams—it was but a soulless waste that she left behind. And the void beyond the visible where God should be, was only a rubbish heap of the shattered hopes and unreciprocated loves of generations gone. But one must go on living. According to the river code, it is not permissible to moon

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

one's self to death like a wan sentimental Latin. I set my teeth in roughwoodsman fashion and formally defied any disappointment to hound me into a grave.

O'Mallory, Miller, and I met that night and crossed to the Island, where we met Jared in the neighborhood of the palace.

Placed on a site, picturesque in itself, this palace was a magnificent structure, one of the finest in the country. It was built in the shape of a vast semicircle, and looked to our provincial eyes a real temple of fairyland. In retrospect, its brief existence and the story that clings round it make it seem still more wonderful. Within a week from that night a mob had wrecked its splendor, and the floods soon thereafter carried away its last vestages. Blennerhassett, as I have said, was a man of amazing little wit. He built his mansion with every precaution against its destruction by earthquakes, of which he had a strangely foolish dread, quite as though it rested in the vicinity of Vesuvius, but he overlooked danger by fire and left out of his calculations the moods of our erratic Ohio.

The Island was Virginia soil, and a slave admitted us, conducting us to one of the parlors. The entire palace was royally furnished, the fittings throughout being in imitation of the French Versailles. I had been there often at balls in the days of its first glory, for the

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Blennerhassetts, before the conspiracy, entertained most lavishly.

On this occasion, Blennerhassett himself was pale and worried. He seemed distressed at the prospect of the expedition starting or not starting, or in fact over any decisive step. I knew him well, as indeed did many of the old residents. To Jared he was almost a stranger; to Miller entirely so. He greeted us cordially when O'Mallory presented us. Poor, misguided man, had it not been for his wife, I doubt if the gorgeous palace would ever have been made a hotbed of treason.

O'Mallory stated that we were all in the conspiracy, albeit on various sides of it; and ready to scramble like a pussy-in-the-corner game for vantage points.

"This Mr. Miller is Wilkinson's man, and Wilkinson is a traitor," O'Mallory said, going straight to the point; "a dirty rascal of a traitor, who is selling us to Spain," and he explained something about the gold, our arrangements for that night, and the pretended message to Burr that we wanted from our host.

Blennerhassett looked weakly to O'Mallory as his spokesman, and O'Mallory to Jared; so the terms, such as they were, were finally made by Jared and Miller.

"We agree on one point," Jared said. "We all want the expedition to go South; you, to

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

found an empire; Mr. Miller, here, to give over the empire to Spain; and I, for reasons possibly of my own." At which O'Mallory tipped off a smile.

Blennerhassett listened confusedly. Some boats were to come to-morrow from the East, and Burr had bade him take passage with them, he confided. But why go South and get an empire if it was to be betrayed?

"Go South to save our necks. At least that is Ezra's reason and mine and I should judge it would still more be yours. Buell will be here to-morrow to confiscate all contraband, a mob very likely completing his work. If you care to go with us—as I tell O'Mallory, I can't promise an empire, but I can promise safety."

"Why should I change my arrangements? My four boats will come to-morrow. I am to wait on them."

"Wait if you choose," Jared said. "It will bring you no luck." He felt in honor bound to offer Blennerhassett an equal chance with the rest of us. "We all want the expedition to go South; afterward we diverge. If Wilkinson can betray us, here's to him. If we can out-general Wilkinson, here's to us. 'Tis a fair chance and even money—and no true sportsman leaves the game before he has seen his hand. Now, if you please, for the message to be given the man in camlet."



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Blennerhassett suggested that they fix it up and submit it to him. Miller and Jared worked for half an hour at this message before it was satisfactory to both. Jared drafted it; Miller wanted it less specific; and finally they handed it to Blennerhassett, bidding him copy in cipher and give the man in camlet, the following:

"Despite his protestations, Wilkinson is with us heart and soul. Trust him—not the bearer of this. Jared Dalrymple is going to betray us."

"The bearer of this," I supposed at the time, not knowing fully Miller's and Jared's plan, was put in to remove some of the blame from Nolan. Jared insisted at first that this message was a mere skeleton lacking emphasis, and was for padding it out with "however's," "but's," and "if's." Miller pointed out that the ciphers had all been short, with insignificant words omitted.

"We will make it more emphatic," he said, underscoring the letters that stood for "us," when it was translated. "There is no mistaking Wilkinson's intentions now."

"But he is not for us," Blennerhassett protested feebly. "Burr must not think he is if you know he is not."

Whereupon, it had to be explained to him again that this message was not intended for Burr, but to be carried to Governor Tiffin only when the camlet cloak was captured that night;

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

for the which capture Jared and Miller had arranged some private plan. Meanwhile, where was the man in the camlet cloak? Thankful told me afterward that she met him on the river bank at their accustomed trysting-place, meaning to warn him away from the point where Jared was ambushed.

"My lady, you are trembling," he said, as he clasped about her arm Eboli's bracelet.

"I was afraid you would be gone and I ran, and—it is so dark."

"It was dark until you came."

By which, belike, he meant a compliment and not a truth at all.

Before they were further on with their chat, a party of Vigilants with hue and cry showed up in the distance. Thankful was bewildered. On the instant, her companion, seeing the canoe offered the only way of escape, whisked her into it beside himself and shot out into mid-stream.

"We will row to the Island, fair lady—dreamily glide along and talk of love. 'Tis the only fit topic, that, between man and maid, all others being but a bunglesome avoidance of it."

"Not to the Island," Thankful stammered. "Of that I came to tell you. Jared waits there in a cabin which you are wont to enter and intends to shoot you with a silver bullet. Not anywhere let us go—but home. I am sure it

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

is very wrong for me to come with you thus, not knowing you."

"Not knowing me? You should know me well, after the untimed hours we've spent together. Were they indeed hours?—oh, so big and full that, had they been timed, they would have measured years."

Thankful was restive, worried over the outcome of her adventure, wondering if the Vigilants had recognized her and what Ancy Ann would say.

"This Jared that you spoke of—is he anything to you? You do not love him?"

"I don't know. I think sometimes in daylight that I do. He is very handsome. But he loves himself—not me at all, as you do—only jokes and teases me, with never an earnest word. No, no, I *don't* love him. But take me back to Marietta now. I will meet you to-morrow."

"There is no to-morrow. Banish to-morrow from your calendar. Let this moment be immortal and we immortal with it. Back to Marietta? When I can drift on thus—and forever—forever, facing you? You don't love Jared then. Say that you do love me."

But Thankful, to her credit, as I conceive such things, did not say it.

"How can I love you—never having really seen you?"

"The more because you've never seen me.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Nay, I'm no uglier than Jared, I'll swear you that; and I think you would marry me in my own proper person. But the night is beautiful and mystic, and love is beautiful and mystic like the night. Under its cloud, we can speak the fond nothings that day and day's prosy tasks would make us blush the folly of. Our faces hidden, we commingle souls; we believe where we see not; and so the glory of faith is added to the glory of love. Thus on—thus on forever, darling, we two alone, wrapped in a great, grand universe. Caress the dark water with your finger tips—so. It was put here for us to float on. Look at the sky; the good God made it a jeweled roof to shelter us. Count the stars; they are yours—all yours. I give them you. Are we not grown great—do you not marvel at this godlike greatness of human personality that can make us in one moment masters of all space—all time?"

Well, surely this was flimsy enough and not even true; but it seems to have impressed Thankful for she owned that she leaned forward involuntarily and dipped her finger tips into the stream and marveled, as he bade her do, quite forgetting Marietta, Jared, and all else but the universe that he said belonged to him and her.

They talked on in this strain, it might be, even sillier—Thankful, noting my disapproval, may not have told me the worst. Then as they

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

neared the Island he took her hands, drawing her to him.

"A kiss, lady of my soul, a kiss. I will not force it. It shall be free and gracious—a pledge from your heart to mine by the route of lips. Come!"

Thankful, it seems, had not thought of him in the least as a caressable thing, and, though Ancy Ann called her too free with such favors to Jared, she drew back now.

"Oh, no. 'Twould be wrong—a sin."

"There is no wrong to those recking not of wrong. Come, a kiss, my pretty Puritan, a kiss. Be it a sin, you shall sanctify it into a virtue. Ah, the doctrine of a hell seeks to befoul our delights, making us afraid of happiness lest it be transgression. When theology was born, poetry began to die. Let us back to the old times with bliss within, heaven around us. Why is it wrong? Just a touch like the flutter of a butterfly's wings—my lips against yours. No wrong about that, sure—too small and dainty for a wrong. Come, my lady."

Here Thankful ended her account to me of their talk. But I misdoubted, from her blushes, that she made a trial of the butterfly-like fluttering. She was an experimental miss, and locked up in a garden with a forbidden tree, I fear she would not have waited for a serpent's suggestion.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

At the Island, they easily slipped the patrol and brought up in the vicinity of the cabin where Jared was concealed. In obedience to the warning she had given, her companion swerved the boat and banked it near a large kiln underneath branches where it would be hidden as well as possible. Then, with courtly apologies, he left her.

For a long hour she sat alone, looking now at the stars in the sky and now at their doubles in the water. The idea of their being hers—all hers, a betrothal gift from a gallant lover, still touched her, though, she admitted, not so much as when their lordly giver was present and bestowing them. Unwittingly her gaze shifted from the sky to the cabin, and she found herself considering Jared. Though he never drifted her into dreamland on a current of romantic words, still he was Jared, a handsome fellow—oh, very handsome when the sunlight stirred his curls. Perhaps, he, too, would give her stars if they were his and he knew she wanted them. As for butterfly wings—Jared sure was not to be outdone there for he had, she vowed, a ritual of kisses, telling them off with book and bell, with a right round speech and reason always, which one could never think in time to controvert.

When her escort reappeared he was accompanied by some of Blennerhassett's men.

"Where are you going?" Thankful shouted,



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

springing from her boat in a frenzy of dismay for the entire party had hurried toward the cabin.

Forgetting herself she hastened after them, feeling that they meant to do harm to Jared and that her warning had set them on. When she reached the rude log building, he of the camlet cloak had just disappeared within. A sound of scuffling was heard. Then there was a sharp report, at which the others forced an entrance, Thankful after them.

There, on the loam floor of the single room, a smoking musket in his hand, stood Jared Dalrymple—alone. Thankful clung to his arm, pouring out her story, while the foremost of Blennerhassett's people seized him, demanding:

"Where has he gone? What have you done with him?"

"Where? The rogue in camlet? Tell me that instead of asking. He rushes in here and assails me. I fire, and lo—he vanishes before my very eyes in a puff of smoke. The fellow was a witch. To-morrow, mark me, there will be a worthless crone somewhere, dead in her bed with a silver bullet in her heart. There is his cloak. He melted out of it and left it on the ground. See where the bullet passed through."

The men examined the garment with awe. The stranger had certainly entered the cabin and had not left the cabin, nor was he in

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

the cabin. After some consultation influenced possibly by the menaces of the Vigilants off shore, this fact was considered by them sufficient confirmation of Jared's story. With a mumbled charm they turned away, glad to be done with so weird an adventure.

Jared threw over his arm the camlet cloak.

"To the slayer belongs the pelt. Come, lady mine. A witch accompanied you here but a man shall row you back."

During the ride home, one theme was foremost in the girl's mind. Over and over she begged Jared to keep her escapade from Ancy Ann, failing to be quieted by his most earnest promises. It was not yet midnight when they reached Marietta. Jared had timed his several adventures accurately.

I was already there and had helped O'Mallory, Miller, and Nolan to load the gold. It had been arranged between Miller and Jared that, as both trusted Nolan, he should be placed in charge of the treasure, going with us to Orleans and conveying us past the forts on the river.

O'Mallory opened a secret trap in the floor of the boat and concealed the sacks of gold in the hold, while a cargo of corn was left above.

"Ah, 'tis one who's dealt with smugglers knows the way to build them," he said.

He was vastly amused when Nolan was pre-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

sented to him, not having believed in the existence of a Nolan and evidently thinking now that Miller, to continue a good joke, had renamed one of his comrades.

Miller himself, as always, distrusted us. He opened every sack and examined its contents before accepting it. He marked them each with a big sooty cross in addition to their other identifications. I think he chalked the ship as well. Certainly he seemed to note the position of every article on deck. When the gold was stored to his satisfaction and the trap locked, O'Mallory said deferentially:

"Who carries the key?"

Nolan was indicated, and the key passed to him.

The Irishman's delight over these precautions, carefully hidden, by the by, from Miller, was beyond me; and it was not till long after that I understood it.

"He's afther thinking me a pirate that'll make away with his Nolan, and he marks me boat against his claiming it at Orleans. Him stay behind—ye say? Arrah now! He will steal a ride with these twenty-three sacks if he has to hang on underneath with the barnacles. Ye'll see."

Well, at length it was done, and Miller and I disembarked. A light burned in the *Sentinel* office but Governor Tiffin was not yet there. While Miller awaited him in the office, I re-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

turned to the house for there were many things to arrange before our departure.

In the kitchen I found Ancy Ann very wroth, having discovered Thankful's absence.

Later, when Thankful herself and Jared entered, Ancy Ann's relief at seeing the girl impelled her to no leniency.

"Your meetings with this stranger are a public scandal. You have disgraced us in the eyes of our townsmen. There shall be an end to it at once. Where have you been?"

Thankful retreated and took up her stand behind Jared, mutely resigning her defense to him. Ancy Ann was a trifle soothed when he described the scene at the cabin and assured her that we were rid forever of the man in the camlet cloak. Her wrath rose anew at learning of Thankful's share. Darting down upon the girl, she was about to administer a vigorous shaking when Jared interposed:

"Easy, easy. A woman owes no reckoning to any but her husband. In a week or so, when we are married, I myself will discipline her as, I doubt not, she has richly merited."

"Married?" repeated Thankful. "I have never said I would take you."

"No, but you will—else I may abandon you to Mistress Ancy here."

"Marry? Marry you?" Ancy Ann shouted. "I'd rather it were even that mischief maker in camlet."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Indeed? Well, so be it then."

Quick as a flash, Jared threw about him the cloak he carried and drew from the breast of his hunting blouse a chapeau which he tilted low over his eyes. Then, assuming a stately posture and a hoarse voice,

"How is that? A good counterpart, eh? If only I had not at the cabin dusted the soot off my brows!"

Ancy Ann, Eboli, and I looked on in bewilderment, while Thankful exclaimed:

"Jared Dalrymple, was it you! and did I tell you to your face that you were handsome?"

"What does it mean?" cried Ancy Ann.

I began to know what it meant and to understand Nolan's denials of being at large. Jared had turned to Eboli.

"The expedition goes South to-night. If you will accompany Ezra and me upon it, you shall see that famous 'enclosed paper.'"

"And me?" said Thankful.

"Oh, you shall come with us, and Mistress Ancy if she wishes. O'Mallory has a noble cabin for ladies."

"Have you all gone daft over this conspiracy?" stormed Ancy Ann. "Go to Orleans with traitors, Ezra Wilbur—you go to Orleans with traitors?"

I backed away from her and behind Jared, much as Thankful had done, while I explained

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

that go I must but that I would return and—and I would return; yes—I would surely return.

"Go then—all of you, and well rid I am. But here, right here, do I stay," and she clutched the arm of her chair as if daring the expedition to dislodge her.

"That is good," Jared smiled. "I hoped you would—to keep a place for us against our homecoming. Perhaps you will even be kind enough to say nothing as to where we are gone."

Ancy Ann's look would have shriveled any one but him.

"Do you think I shall shout from the house top that my brother has turned traitor?"

"It has been you, then, masquerading as Nolan?" I said apart to Jared.

"Since he was captured—yes. I couldn't tell you about it, Ezra, for you would have betrayed the whole ruse to Miller the first time he looked at you or marked your actions. It was desperately unfortunate that I couldn't tell you for you took to disobeying every order I issued. I bade you have your canoe under the buckeyes of the North Inlet—"

"Don't!" I begged.

"Then there was the night that you set upon me at the Violet in the Dell, bowling me off the stoop—"

"Don't!"



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"And burning my papers that I'd been at such pains to get—"

"Don't, Jared, please don't!"

"We could have gone quietly to bed this night, if you hadn't been so zealous. O'Mallory helped me with the stratagem. I dodged the Vigilants finely, hiding my cloak and coming up as myself always when they thought they had treed their game. But when my death sentence was passed, do you wonder I volunteered to execute it myself?"

Thankful had come up and put her hand on Jared's with a pretty air of proprietorship.

"And it was you all the while who said the lovely things to me. Jared Dalrymple, who would have believed that you could make love so beautifully? Oh, if Ezra could have heard!"

Jared's face flushed a bit at this compliment and he turned it off with a jest. Nor did I wonder. "Making love beautifully" is considered a trifling business by sturdy pioneers, being fit, like painting and singing fancy songs, only for Italians and such. I was glad that I had not heard Jared doing it.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

### CHAPTER XXV

MILLER came to the door presently to tell us that the Governor was in the *Sentinel* office. To His Excellency, therefore, our adventures were repeated, Jared having first confided in Nolan and Miller his appropriation that evening of the camlet cloak.

Nolan was so delighted with the expedition's start, which he felt was due to Jared, that he assented to whatever Jared proposed. Our pretended devotion to Burr impressed him as the logical thing, in view of the suspicions against us and the chances of preferment in an empire. The corruptionist's maxim, "Every man has his price," has led to the undoing of many a rogue. So versed was Nolan in conspirings and the ways of knaves that he had left honesty quite out of his calculations.

The plan, then, was for Nolan to take the blame of making off with the gold; and for Jared to state to the Governor that, since Nolan's capture, he had himself worn the camlet in the interests of the United States to discover what he could of the treason. Miller was left uncertain as to whether Jared or Nolan had been the man in camlet previous to that night. I fear he suspected it was Jared,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

being wiser than Nolan in that he did count on the world's containing honest men. However, he went with us to the *Sentinel* office and upheld Jared's story most determinedly before the Governor.

It was a plausible tale as they told it, and a noble scapegoat did they make of Nolan. First, there was the capture of Nolan and the gold by Miller and me which showed up a valiant act; then Miller striving in one way, and Jared in another to subvert the conspiracy, till at last they became convinced that both were working for the same purpose. The Governor was the easier persuaded because he believed in Miller and wanted to believe in Jared.

When Jared produced the manufactured message to Burr, Governor Tiffin opened it and read the translation, as Jared wrote it down.

"Despite his protestations, Wilkinson is with us heart and soul. Trust him — not the bearer of this. Jared Dalrymple is going to betray us."

"The bearer of this" meant, they explained, that Blennerhassett probably suspected the disguise; thus totally clearing Jared before His Excellency.

But this entire faith of the traitors in Wilkinson troubled the Governor. Despite Miller's exposition of Blennerhassett's stupidity, it still troubled him. He therefore, at Miller's sug-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

gestion, appointed Jared an official messenger South to warn the General of Burr's coming, and bid him, if he valued his honor and safety, prove Blennerhassett's statements unfounded.

When the warrant was written and Governor Tiffin opened the door to go, an untoward thing happened. Eboli and Thankful were standing outside, and Thankful, having just unclasped the bracelet from her arm, was returning it to its owner. The flash of the diamond caught the Governor's eye. It was little he knew about that gem, but a little he did know, and something—my face possibly, for I was dismayed—inspired him with distrust. He turned back into the office, looked at the camlet cloak then at Jared with a strange look, and sat down again before the cipher message.

"Where is Nolan? Let me see him," he said.

"He escaped Jared to-day, Your Excellency." There was just the faintest hint of suggestiveness in Miller's tone.

Carefully the Governor wrote down the cipher and an inverted alphabet, and deliberately counted off every letter in it for himself. The ciphers, as I once said, contained neither punctuation nor capitals. When he had written out the words and pointed it off, he rose, sternly telling us to read. This was the sentence:

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Despite his protestations, Wilkinson is with U. S. heart and soul. Trust him not. The bearer of this, Jared Dalrymple, is going to betray U. S."

Was it possible when we had gone so far that a pair of periods was to be our ruin?

"Look, Colonel Russel, we have been deceived. What do you make of it?"

Now Miller had used a bewildering duplicity in fixing that message to read the two ways, and we were not surprised when he quietly repudiated us, though with a face as white as Jared's.

"It evidently means, as Your Excellency says, that we may have been deceived."

"But 'U. S.,' Your Excellency—" Jared protested. "Where do you get that?"

"Those letters are underscored both times. Common custom would make them capitals. And, being capitals, what can they mean, in view of the frequency with which abbreviations are employed in these ciphers, but the United States?"

"It was emphasis," said Jared. I had never seen Jared dazed before. "Oh, my God!"

But his stupor vanished when Governor Tiffin demanded back his warrant.

"I decline to give it."

The Governor ordered Miller to take in forcibly. Pistol in hand, Jared warned him off with the look of a tiger at bay.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"I am going South this night," he said. "With all due reverence, Your Excellency shall not prevent me. General Wilkinson is *not* with the United States. The expedition is ready to start—would start in any case, if not to-night with me, to-morrow morning with Blennerhassett, before General Buell comes. Unless I am with it to prevent its joining with Burr at the Cumberland river, in two months the empire will be an accomplished fact."

The Governor in speechless anger stared at Jared then, realizing the futility of contending with him, rushed out of doors. We followed, thinking he was going after aid, but instead he turned to the granary. The sacks of gold were gone; and seeing a boat down by the river, he hurried toward and boarded it in his anxiety to learn the whereabouts of the gold and the extent of Jared's treachery. As it happened, it was not the flatboat which held Nolan and the bags, but a second rather spacious one that had been fitted up for Burr and Blennerhassett themselves and was styled "The Emperor's Barge." O'Mallory had brought it round for our use on the trip.

Jared leaped on it after Governor Tiffin, and, to my immense horror, pushed shut the door of the cabin that His Excellency had entered, locked it, and made the first and one of the greatest of Ohio's Governors a prisoner. He then disembarked and sought Miller, who



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

was full of apologies as Jared rushed toward him with clenched fists.

"I never thought the Governor would discover the double reading. I only meant it as an escape for the General in case—"

But without hearing him through, Jared, with threats of future vengeance, bade him get along to the Island and prepare to load the musketry. Miller obeyed without reluctance, thinking evidently that Jared would make even a better scapegoat than Nolan.

We gathered Eboli, Thankful, and their belongings on board; then bidding adieu to my angry sister, we let loose and floated down stream.

At the warehouse, we found the men and stores already started.

When we reached the Island, the guns had been loaded and distributed among the recruits. The one cannon was placed aboard the Emperor's Barge; and away we went, Jared waving a tantalizing farewell to Miller, who was still on the Island.

"We have parted company with him. Let us be thankful, Ezra, whatever is before us, that Miller is behind us."

Recalling O'Mallory's words, I myself was not so confident that we were quit of Miller.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

### CHAPTER XXVI

I HARDLY know how to write the history of that memorable trip to New Orleans. There were sixteen boats all loaded to the brim, and quite a respectable flotilla they made when assembled in mid-stream. When we were down by Gallipolis, O'Mallory told us:

"That fellow ye'er afther naming Nolan, I've told him about our plans and he is with us. He's an ould bird at it—said he'd been conspiring before he ever heard of A. Burr, and that so long as he and Jim Wilkinson saved this load of money, we might choose our own emperor for all he cared. So I promised him a post as Governor of Texas; he picked on Texas, saying he had a grudge against it for killing him—which was a gay joke of his—and proposed to get even. But he's with us."

Meanwhile, Governor Tiffin raged indignantly in his cabin and would hold no converse with us. One day his wrath cooled sufficiently for him to ask Jared what he meant by such conduct.

"I mean to give Your Excellency an object lesson in the loyalty of certain officers."

Whereat the Governor roundly abused his impudence.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

When we neared Cincinnati, Governor Tiffin pointed toward Fort Washington and condescended a second remark.

"Here we will stop. Before I left Chillicothe I sent orders to this fort, in compliance with the legislature's directions, to challenge all armed expeditions."

"Ah, but I have Your Excellency's own warrant to pass."

And pass we did without opposition.

At the mouth of the Cumberland river we anchored a day, and Aaron Burr himself came aboard. With Napoleonic bearing, he reviewed and complimented us and gave O'Mallory no end of valuable information about his plans; where and how he was to meet Wilkinson in Orleans, which forts were to surrender to him, and the formulæ he was to use in making his demands

Ah, the blarney of that Irishman! His persuasive ways, his "mavourneens," "darlints," and, above all, his promises, were enough to deceive any man. They inspired me with an acute sense of insecurity. Jared and I—might we not be his next victims? The worst phase of treason is that it is made up of traitors, and an honest man stranded in such quarters is sore put to it to find a single reliable person in whom to repose confidence.

The Governor, overhearing all from his cabin, worked himself into a fat fury, and ful-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

minated protests until O'Mallory confidentially informed Burr that it was a sailor gone daft, who fancied himself Ohio's Governor. Poor Burr—he was so sorry for such a deluded man.

Eboli was presented to Burr by O'Mallory as the English emissary and royal daughter of King George. Burr, however, insisted she was an actress, and that Princess Eboli was a creature in a German play. They were congenial companions, those two. Eboli coquetted, sang songs, and matched him on Shakespearean fancies, for Burr was a monstrous reader. I doubt not he had read in his time, before this treason beset him, more than ten square feet of books, which, as I estimate it, is the scope of the Belpre Circulating Library.\*

When O'Mallory, as a climax to his flatterings, asked for a fresh order to be given Eboli, empowering her to treat with Nolan for the 'enclosed paper' and securing for us the assistance of the English fleet, Burr refused to give it.

"Wait till we reach Orleans safely," he insisted.

He was so resolute about this, we concluded, Jared and I, that Eboli had furnished him a hint of Wilkinson's treacherous intentions and Jared's own loyalty to the United States.

"We'll have to take him with us to Orleans

---

\* An institution of which early Marietta was very proud.

—C. B.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

then, and cut him out at the very finish," O'Mallory declared.

But Jared was bound that he would have none of Burr's company on our trip.

"Let me see him alone," he urged. "I'm immense at persuasions. I will get a new order from him."

So there was a private interview between the two and directly after, Burr went ashore to gather up his belongings and complete his preparations for accompanying us.

"Did he write ye another warrant?" O'Mallory inquired solicitously.

"He did," replied Jared breezily; "but I am like himself—I'll not give it to your princess till we reach New Orleans."

"I don't see how ye did it. He was uncommon obstinate on that point. But if ye have done it, sure, there's no reason for taking him along." And O'Mallory immediately ordered his men to up anchor and away.

Never shall I forget Burr's look as those boats slid by him. He did not comprehend at first, I think, what was happening. When the situation became apparent, for fat furies he outdid the Governor in the cabin. He shouted and swore; he reached out his hands as if to clutch and hold us. My last view of the would-be American emperor was a wildly gesticulating head between a pair of arms that waved frantically toward us.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Governor Tiffin observed this proceeding with so much amazement that he called Jared to him and addressed him for the third time during our voyage.

"You are forgetting your master."

"Your Excellency's pardon. My master accompanies me," Jared corrected with a gracious bow.

"Where are we going?" the Governor asked presently, after a futile struggle of dignity with curiosity.

"We are going to conquer Texas and perhaps Mexico. At least, we are going to show that it can be done."

"Conquer Mexico—with sixteen flatboats and one cannon!"

"Governor, you called me impudent. Well, it is impudence that wins. In war or out of it, march forward bold-faced and demand every one's surrender. If your assurance is sufficiently convincing, the apparent weakness of your batteries is rather an advantage; you will then be credited with unnumbered reinforcements, else you would not have dared. 'Tis those visionary reinforcements that win our battles."

"You will be credited rather with simple craziness."

"Well, suppose so. I arrested Black Pigeon out of his own wigwam because, we will say, I was crazy enough to try. Lunatics are wor-



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

shipped by Indians and feared by everybody. There are times when it is worth while being a madman. Amaze your adversaries. Play mental highwayman, knocking their wits out by the bigness of your effrontery and taking what you want before they recover. 'Tis the whole theory of success. Faith, if you doubt, ask Bonaparte, but—I am overly honest myself to do it well.”

“And so you expect to conquer Mexico with sixteen flatboats and one cannon?”

“It could be done but it is not necessary. There is Wilkinson’s army and the English fleet—though my soul, ’twas the immensity of the plan that won both Wilkinson’s army and the English fleet. Besides I figure that Mexico will not resist.”

I left them still haranguing on probabilities.

When we reached Fort Victory on the Mississippi—the first of the forts mentioned in Nolan’s paper—Jared ordered the cannon leveled at it and the flatboats to make a demonstration; while he sent O’Mallory ashore with a demand for its surrender, couched in the words Burr had given us. Governor Tiffin waited the result with intense interest. When the fort did capitulate unconditionally, he began to admit, for the first time, that Wilkinson might be guilty of treachery. Jared, too shrewd to leave himself in Wilkinson’s power, surprised the command at the fort by removing all officers

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

and supplanting them with some of O'Mallory's men. The deposed officers, we took aboard one of our boats, giving them in charge of some of our trusted soldiers.

Well, this method of procedure was kept up all down the river; and the Governor, realizing now that the expedition was not in the interests of Burr, began to think with O'Mallory that Jared meant to found an empire for himself. His Excellency grew gradually calmer, having gone through, and tired of every stage of anger and excitement. He even developed a dispassionate curiosity as to how it was all coming out, so that every day Jared would confer with him, telling him of what he had accomplished and his chances of success.

So we glided and paddled along till we reached New Orleans; a string of forts behind us and a cargo of traitorous captains, majors, and colonels on our boats. At Orleans, whom should we meet but Miller himself on one of the wharves. He told us he had slipped aboard the treasure boat up at the Island and O'Mallory had forthwith made him a prisoner. O'Mallory smiled at Jared's rebukes.

"'Tis mesilf let him slip on board and off board for a purpose. Ye'll be afther understanding some day, darlint."

Of course, Miller having the opportunity, had preceded us to Wilkinson with the whole tale of Jared's usurpation. As a consequence,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

we were suddenly baffled just at the crowning moment of victory. Wilkinson sent Miller to state to us that unless we retired at once we would be fired upon.

We were forced to return to a point above Orleans, where we passed a day of dreary discouragement. O'Mallory urged upon Jared the necessity of trading to Eboli Nolan's 'enclosed paper' and the new Burr warrant for her signal code. With the assistance of the English admiral, we could shortly bring Wilkinson to terms.

"Why don't you do it?" I asked, for Jared dallied the day through without producing the Burr order and was sitting on deck with me, downcast and dispirited, late that night. "The English fleet is down in the Gulf. Let's get its help."

"We can no easier get help of the English fleet than if it were the other side of the Atlantic."

"Eboli has the signal code," I suggested.

"Eboli has it though — note that — not ourselves."

"We can get it from her by means of Nolan's paper and the new Burr warrant which you possess."

"How do you know I possess Burr's warrant?"

"You said so yourself up at the Cumberland river."

"I lied."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

My eyes opened in sudden horror at our predicament.

"I lied," Jared repeated desperately. "Burr refused to give a second order. If O'Mallory had known it, he would have insisted on bringing him down here with us. It was risky—it was impossible to have Burr's company. With him on the ground, O'Mallory, when he found we were for the Union, would have returned to his old master and made Burr an emperor in spite of us. I didn't think the warrant would matter. It wouldn't have mattered if Miller had not been before us and warned Wilkinson. The General would have surrendered on demand, just as the other officers did, and we could then have turned his guns on himself. What is the use of talking? It is past help now. The country is safe perhaps. We have rumbled their plans till they will hardly be able to patch up an empire. But ourselves—for all our loyalty, Ezra, we are traitors in law. It has come to that. We have levied active war on the United States and, without the English fleet to help us carry it to a successful issue, we can never prove the innocence of our motives. Are your pistols primed? It's neither pleasant nor manly putting a bullet through one's self, but it is rather better than dangling from a rope."

"I'll live it out," I said decisively, "live it out till I die, and so will you."

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Till morning, Ezra, just till morning. We can tell then positively how things are going. If they don't turn and go our way, they shall end forever so far as I am concerned. A traitor—I will not die like a traitor."

Jared had gone to his cabin. I remained where he left me, thinking moodily of all he had said. Suddenly Eboli appeared beside me and thrust a packet into my hands.

"Take it, Ezra. I've been listening. It is the code of signals to the English fleet. It is yours."

"What do you mean?"

Her voice was strained, her whole bearing that of a woman scarce in her senses. She laughed slightly at my bewilderment.

"Did I say that as though I were wound up with a spring and had to hurry out the words before the works ran down?"

"The code of signals to the English fleet—but what am I to give you in exchange for it?"

"Nothing. Don't you understand? I overheard Jared's words just now and I am having another moment. The ecstasy of sacrifice that once lured me to the grave's brink has power this instant to pipe me on to utter irremediable ruin. That's better yet—more affecting—more tragic—altogether better. Do you see what I am doing? I am turning traitor for you. I am giving you my signal code, my precious signal

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

code that represents all my chances of advancement. I want you to be sure and see just what I am doing. 'Tis a performance with fireworks, this of mine, and I wouldn't for the world have you miss a single rocket. Play it as I will, I'm but a tyro at heroism else I'd be indifferent to anybody's appreciation. But so-so greatness will pass muster when it brings you salvation. There is the code in your hands. However badly I present it, the fact remains."

"The code?" I gazed at her only half comprehending. Her hysterical cynicisms, the excited catches and breaks in her voice combined to bewilder me.

"All my worldly hopes and possibilities are tied up in that packet, Ezra, yet I freely give it to you. Without it, or its equivalent, I am an outcast hereafter in my own country, discredited by the men in power, my old disgrace revived. There is no coronet possible for me now—no gilded frescos and mirror-plastered rooms. It is retribution that the things for which I broke my promise to you should be denied me in the end."

"All your hopes and possibilities—and you give them to me?"

"To you. Take the packet. Keep it. Hide it. Don't give it to me if I should come in an hour or so, like a recanting coward, begging for it back."

"All your hopes and possibilities—I thank



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

you for them, but I can't let you do so much for me," I said resolutely.

"You will if you love me. The supreme favor love can do is to receive gratefully what love's bounty offers."

She clasped her hands behind her when I tried to return the packet.

"If you love me, Ezra —"

"Wait till morning," I urged, confused by this plea, "till you have had opportunity to consider and realize what you are doing."

"That is a cruel jeer at the way I behaved after the Violet burned. I didn't think you could be so hard tongued."

"Indeed, child, I had no such meaning. If you insist, I will prove it to you. But wait till morning. I will take the papers in the morning—truly I will, if you are still of a mind to give them to me."

"No, no, to-night. Time works such changes. How can I tell? In the morning I may not be of a mind to give them. Help me along, Ezra. For your sake, my sake, Jared's sake, take them to-night. They are a token of my love. If you love me one spark, you will accept them as gleefully as you once did my bow of ribbon."

"It is an impulse and you will repent it."

"It is an impulse—and—I will repent it. Oh, I know myself. A million selfish times I will be sorry for the folly of this hour and

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

wish that I had let you die rather than throttle my own career. But it is done. I can never undo it. In this act I have cut my moorings. There is one noble thing at last to my credit which, despite all after-weakness, will have to stand in its hard results my whole life through. God is good, Ezra, good and merciful and forgiving of all the harsh thoughts I had about Him. See, He sent your peril to raise me out of myself for one more glorious second. You will not deprive me of it? You will accept the packet?"

Her pathetic words and pleading eyes won me. Heaven knows I would have made any sacrifice for her but there are times when it is the part of generosity to forego being generous, and to let another be the donor. I bowed mutely and tucked the packet in my breast.

"If there is nothing for you now in England, perhaps you will stay with me?" I suggested.

She shook her head. "I can't. We're incompatibles. My style of life isn't yours. There'd be exasperations. I might try, but I know I'd fail. And suppose we should marry—what would it come to? What is the daily forced affection of a lifetime beside the two sublime moments that I have lavished on you?"

I sighed. Her words were indisputable. A turtle cannot hope to mate with a shooting star.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Ezra, I have given you to-night everything in the world that is of value to me. What more can you ask than this?"

She held out her arms to me. I was not slow in acting up to the situation. As I clasped her to my heart, I said:

"This, then, is the end?"

"This is the end. We did not die at the Violet in the Dell; we lived for this. You see the curtain of night all around us. In a day—or two—or a week perhaps—I shall be behind that curtain forever. This is the end. Kisses and love and sacrifice—we can add nothing to this. A great height held for an hour is better than a long path through dull valleys. Kiss me again, Ezra—and again—and good-bye."

The next morning I gave the code to Jared, whose delight was greater than I can tell. He promptly traded it to Nolan for the 'enclosed paper.' While the boats remained stationary above Orleans, Jared, O'Mallory, and Nolan with the signal code, made their way down through the city and into the Gulf.

Then one radiant morning we saw the English fleet enter the river and skirmish about in the vicinity of General Wilkinson's headquarters.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

### CHAPTER XXVII

“GOVERNOR TIFFIN, terms are to be made to-day. Do you care to listen?” Jared said.

General Wilkinson, awed by the presence of the English fleet, had condescended to treat with us. In his anxiety to obtain the best conditions possible, he with Miller came aboard the Emperor's Barge. The Governor and myself listened from His Excellency's cabin. Wilkinson, Jared, Miller, Nolan, and O'Mallory were present at the conference. It was all very irregular, but so was the situation irregular and so had been Wilkinson's action from the first in entering the conspiracy.

Jared spoke:

“General, your ‘favorite trooper’ bids you welcome. As you see, I have a fancy for being emperor. Would you kindly acknowledge me as such?”

But General Wilkinson covered his humiliation at having come aboard by an access of dignity. Refusing to recognize Jared, he addressed his reply to Miller.

“You will tell the fellow that his question is as unwarranted as his actions.”

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

Then, when Miller had repeated this—

“However, if he choose to make known what basis he has for the demand, he is at liberty to speak.”

“I have conquered the forts on the river; the frontier posts of Texas and Mexico surrendered on demand; the English fleet is at my beck. Do you accept me instead of Burr as your emperor?”

“I have not yet accepted Burr.”

“The General is over-cautious. If he would recall the existence of a certain ‘enclosed paper’ so-styled, he might consent to an admission.”

“The forts and posts may have surrendered under a misapprehension,” Wilkinson said still to Miller. “You may ask the gentleman what there is to prevent them, when the mistake is discovered, from returning to their allegiance?”

“The forts have been re-officered throughout,” explained Jared, smiling at his advancement from “fellow” to “gentleman.” “The garrisons themselves, I infer, not having been consulted regarding a surrender, would serve one emperor as willingly as another, being of preference loyal to the United States. The forts are excellent vantage points. General Wilkinson would have need of more than one cannon in reconquering them. Then there would be the difficulty of explaining to President Jefferson their surrender in the first instance.”

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

"Is this true?"

"Perfectly. If you doubt, I can show you our prisoners. Everything from a corporal to a general is on the flatboats yonder. You see, you have lost all favor in the republic—a convicted traitor already. Do you cast in your lot with an empire?"

There was a conference at this between the General and Miller. Well as they knew Jared, the conference could have but one end. Presently Miller asked:

"What terms do you offer?"

"Unconditional surrender."

"And what assurance has the General that he will not be deposed like the other officers?"

"None at all. In fact, we should supplant him immediately with O'Mallory before he had opportunity to betray us, as he intended to betray Burr."

"I refuse," thundered Wilkinson.

"So be it. That 'enclosed paper' in the eyes of your Government, proves you a traitor; a trifling bombardment from the fleet reduces your headquarters yonder; and my empire is none the less established."

The quandary on the General's part was solved by Miller.

"With all respect for Mr. Dalrymple, I suggest that he drop this little farce. We admit, say, that he might become an emperor and possess himself of an empire, but—I



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

never believed he was for Burr nor do I believe now that he is desirous of founding an empire. Mr. Dalrymple is at this moment just what he has always been, a servant of the United States. That being so, the situation is not so completely in the hollow of his hand as he could wish."

"What?" shouted O'Mallory. Jared silenced him with a side word of warning.

The Governor, standing beside me, had been listening implacably. Now his sternness began to melt into a fond glowing pride in humanity. He looked at Jared as though he could embrace him.

"You would like to ruin us irretrievably," Miller went on. "You came South for that purpose. You might have accomplished it but, when you laid your plans, you did not count on the honor of His Excellency's company. Before you dictate over-harsh terms, you will consider their effect on the standing of the Governor."

"True," said Jared. "I have proved what was possible. Perhaps it has gone far enough."

He advanced to our cabin.

"Your Excellency, I place in your hands the capitulations of the forts, the 'enclosed paper'—everything. I desire to return to the United States the empire I have won. Will you honor us with your presence on deck and your assistance in formulating terms?"

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

The effect of this action was indiscribable. Miller alone had foreseen and was pleased by it. Wilkinson did not see as yet how it helped him. Nolan read in it his ruin. As for O'Mallory, he advanced dismayed; but before he could protest, Jared had figuratively bundled him into his own proper canoe and was floating him on full tide into executive favor.

"Your Excellency, to Captain O'Mallory here much credit is due. Without his aid, this expedition could never have been a success."

"The empire—" O'Mallory began.

Jared stared squarely and mesmerically at him, while he answered:

"There is no empire possible now. Your men came to found one—true. But you and I have out-generaled them. We deserted Burr up river; we have commanded the posts to arrest him when he and Blennerhassett arrive with the few remaining boats. The garrisons of the forts will be glad to return to their loyalty, which indeed none but some corrupt commanders have deserted. Tell your men, O'Mallory, that we consider them misled, to be pitied rather than condemned."

Governor Tiffin extended the heartiest thanks to O'Mallory, to which the Irishman responded most gracefully, being shrewd enough to accept the position Jared assigned him. This done, the Governor's face grew stern again.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

He refused to recognize Wilkinson, much as Wilkinson had refused recognition to Jared.

"You, Mr. Dalrymple, will take to President Jefferson forthwith my official report of this matter, accompanied by the 'enclosed paper.'"

"Your pardon," Miller protested. "But I think Your Excellency forgets, what I am sure Mr. Dalrymple does not, Your Excellency's own share in this expedition."

"What!" exclaimed the Governor.

"I had intended," Jared said, "to precede Burr, come South just as I have done, take possession of my empire, and then surrender it publicly to the United States. Such a course would have included the disgrace of these two men. But Your Excellency's presence changes matters. In order to keep that secret, we must give more generous terms."

"And Your Excellency will see the advisability of keeping it secret." Miller proceeded. "The Governor of Ohio accompanies a traitorous expedition South—admirable capital that, for your political enemies. If you will allow us to return to our posts and give us back the 'enclosed paper,' we will continue those measures against Burr and his comrades which Mr. Dalrymple has begun; we will arrest him and appear against him when he is tried for treason. The Union shall be preserved inviolate but, we stipulate, it must be preserved, to

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

appearances, by General Wilkinson's efforts, with this advance move of yours kept secret. Thereafter then, the General will be safeguarded for Your Excellency cannot give information of this conference without admitting yourself a passenger on an expedition, about which none will ever know much, save that it was treasonable."

"Do they mean to make me out an ally of Burr?" demanded Governor Tiffin wrathfully of Jared.

"Your Excellency, I can sympathize," said Jared. "I have been through it all myself."

"If you refuse us these terms," Miller continued, "you will have to conquer us forcibly and take Mexico. In view of your admissions to Mr. O'Mallory and to Mr. Nolan, you would have some difficulty in securing their co-operation. Best keep everything secret."

Well, there were demands and counter-demands but Miller finally prevailed. O'Mallory stated positively that his men would go no farther toward securing an empire unless an empire it was to be. It was his confidence in Jared which had been our motive power. To an extent, we yet had matters in our own hands. Burr's chance was hopelessly wrecked and the Union preserved.

Beyond that, Wilkinson was in the ascendency. He could boldly claim credit for Burr's overthrow, and if we chose to speak the truth,

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

he might swear that we were all, from His Excellency down, confederates of Burr. It would be, as Miller said, only a question of veracity on a very ugly matter between a Governor and a General.

So it was arranged that the General was to make as if loyal from the first, and the officers from the several garrisons to be returned undisgraced to their posts—among them Nolan, who held a minor commission. These concessions were distasteful to Governor Tiffin but he finally yielded.

"If only Your Excellency had trusted me at Marietta," Jared said, "I could have arranged the affair to include Wilkinson's complete undoing. But enough of a bad business. Let us give thanks that the conspiracy is at an end."

Miller and Nolan took from the flotilla the flatboat containing the gold—that was among their stipulations—and floated it down to the General's headquarters. Before it could be unloaded or its contents examined, its hold began to fill with water, and presently it sank. Jared and I suspected afterward that O'Mallory had staved it in. At all events, while the labor of raising it was going on, the Irishman had departed, having forgiven Jared heartily for his duplicity.

"Sure, a treason is like anny other sport. The best man should win. Ye beat us fair and

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

square at our own game; and 'tis no malice Michael O'Mallory bears an honest victor. There's a smuggler friend of mine in the Gulf will take me back to ould Ireland. Mavourneen, I have divided the stores among my men, and they've gone colonizing for honest—sure they have. But there's one boat yet, a seventeenth loaded with corn, stranded in the background. Can't I take it along with me to relieve the famine and disthress in Ireland?"

Surely, as the corn belonged to nobody, better use of it could not be made.

"I'll take it to Thomas A. Emmet in New York—he is head of the Relief Committee—with Jared Dalrymple's compliments, and send ye his receipt."

Then his gaze grew reminiscent, and he presently added:

"I was thinking what a brave bye of an emperor ye would have made had ye only have chosen."



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

### CHAPTER XXVIII

ON THE Emperor's Barge at Orleans, Jared and Thankful were married, Governor Tiffin performing the ceremony. On a visit to the English flagship, soon after, Eboli presented Thankful to a duke.

"A little man," Thankful told us on her return, "without a single curl. I didn't know dukes were like that. If you could marry him or Jared, Eboli, wouldn't you vastly prefer Jared?"

"Knowing both, I would. Only," Eboli added with a winsome glance at me, "only, I think myself, I should prefer Ezra."

Eboli returned to England with the fleet. Across a waste of water I watched her standing at the vessel's side. Her graceful figure and fluttering kerchief grew dim and vanished in the distance. The ship became a speck; it rounded the horizon; and then—the curtain of darkness fell between us and she was lost to me forever.

The boat of gold was raised out of the Mississippi. Wilkinson, we understood, affecting to have no knowledge of, or claim on it, retained only the customary per cent. of its cargo

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

for salvage; his per cent. including, of course, the sacks in the hold.\*

It was a long and, for me, rather tedious journey up river to Marietta, livened only by the accounts we heard from time to time of Burr. The four boats from above Marietta had, it seemed, made their way South, Blennerhassett with them, and joined Burr, as proposed, at the mouth of the Cumberland. It was rather a pitiful expedition, that of his, as he floated confidently down stream with the little remnant we had left him, expecting fleet and army to dignify his enterprise. But the militia and Wilkinson's regulars blocked his way. He was arrested once and released, his sophistries being too much for country justices. Ah, the persuasive tongue of him! Given but a courtroom and leave to speak, he could any

---

\*"It does appear in evidence, that General Wilkinson saved a quantity of public corn which was sunk in the Mississippi on board of a public boat, in front of his quarters at New Orleans; out of which, after he had caused it to be removed on shore and dried, he detained two hundred and three flour barrels full of said corn in the ear—and for which quantity he afterward sent his receipt to Colonel Russel, under whose charge said corn was transported from the Ohio to New Orleans, as will more fully appear by reference to the testimony. The court is therefore of the opinion that the taking of said corn in the manner above stated, does not constitute a military offense."

From the findings of the court-martial of General Wilkinson in 1811.—C. B.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

day convince twelve tried men and true that black was white; that all the world else might be wrong, but he, Aaron Burr, was right. He was recaptured at Wakefield, Alabama, the eighteenth of February, and taken East for the great treason trial at Richmond. At Portsmouth Governor Tiffin left us, journeying up the Scioto to Chillicothe.

We reached Marietta bringing the first reliable news of Burr, which we put into another extra, more successful even than the first. The Vigilants gave us a rousing reception with bonfires, processions, and speeches by General Putnam and Ephraim Cutler; for the current story that Jared went South as a United States agent got itself magnified into the truth—that the conspiracy was wrecked by his individual efforts. Ancy Ann was placated, partly by the news of Burr's overthrow, but more, I fear, by the bonfires.

We never told the Vigilants of Jared's identity with the man in the camlet cloak. As Jared said:

"It was fine sport being set on by them to capture myself, but I fear me they might not relish the joke."

And the Island—ah, me, the Island! It had been a camping ground for a company of Virginia militia. The palace was sacked while we were South and the Island itself was soon after attached on a note of Burr's which Blen-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

nerhassett had endorsed. Blennerhassett himself still under the spell, followed his master East and nigh got himself lynched with Burr at Baltimore. He was something of a hero—Blennerhassett, quite the best figure in the whole conspiracy. If not a great mind, at least he possessed a noble fidelity, ill-rewarded, pitifully ill-rewarded, for the man who had used and destroyed him, flung him off with neither compassion nor gratitude. \*

As for Burr, though acquitted, he was, as we all know, not vindicated. At his trial he looked to me half pathetic, half ridiculous, playing up to the part of a martyr and bidding his daughter, Theodosia, search the classics for parallels of noble men like himself persecuted because of their virtues. Whether the stain will wear off from his name in time, I know not. It may be, though I can ill conceive it

---

\*“I resolved to burst the cobweb duplicity of all his evasion with me upon money matters; long and insidiously he has trifled with my claims upon him, and this day he has treated me not as a faithful associate ruined by my past connection with him, but rather as an importunate creditor invading his leisure, or his purse, with a questionable account.” Blennerhassett’s Journal, after his utter ruin by Burr. Burr listened to his appeal for aid for his impoverished family with a mocking sneer, as Blennerhassett further writes:

“With such an absence of that suavity of address with which he has too often diverted me from my purpose, as now exhibit him a heartless swindler.”—C. B.

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

now, that apologists will some day arise for him. The greatness of his abilities, the marvelous daring of his enterprise, above all, the vastness of his ruin, are an epic theme. Lucifer in Heaven was lost among the shining throng; only in his fall did he become of consequence. But Burr's disgrace and the subsequent poverty of Blennerhassett have always failed to touch me greatly. 'Tis no worse for one to lose than for thousands never to have had. Nor can a romantic life and tragic fate, to my mind, make a traitor for one moment aught else but a traitor.

And Wilkinson—he, too, was acquitted, not vindicated. He wore a sword and held a commission in the War of '12, Jared and I being for a time once more in his command.

Nolan seems to have been the only sufferer among all the conspirers—if it be indeed our Nolan of whom rumor speaks. We have heard whispers from time to time of the strange fate of a certain Philip Nolan, who was implicated in the Burr conspiracy and who, for cursing the United States, was sentenced to exile, to be known henceforth as "The Man Without a Country." The Southern residents have affected to disbelieve in the existence of such a man, saying that he was shot—ah, Jared and I reckon well of that matter—in Waco, Texas, in eighteen hundred and one. Sure, it may not have been our Phil, though he was mightily given to cursing what pleased

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

him not. Still he suddenly disappeared from our ken, and the mystery of his alleged fate, so in keeping with his mysterious resurrection, gave color to Jared's and my suspicions.

One day, a few weeks after our homecoming, a messenger from the East came to the *Sentinel* office and delivered Jared two letters. The first of them he read in bewilderment. It was from the Irish patriot, Thomas Addis Emmet, and gratefully acknowledged the receipt of two hundred and eighty-five thousand dollars in gold sent to him as head of the Irish Relief Association by Jared Dalrymple—a right royal present, which he would apply as directed toward the alleviation of the hunger and wretchedness in Ireland.

The second letter was from O'Mallory and it read:

“Me darlint—Ye'er afther understanding. I had two boats alike—naturally, me building them by the score. When that Miller chalked up the one, I chalked up the other, putting the twenty-three duplicate bags of real corn in its hold. The chap ye call Nolan took his on; and I left mine sort of frisking about the Island while we loaded the musketry, mutely inviting Miller to come aboard. He came aboard, thinking I mayhap had desthroyed his Nolan, and I locked him up before he had time to do more than spy the twenty-three sacks in the hold. At Orleans he picked the boat out, having



## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

---

chalked it some more; and, praise be, it sank, while I was getting off with the other.

"A broth of a jest—that, and 'tis I am guessing that ye'll forgive me, me bye, for playing it."

Jared laughed long when he read these missives. For the rest of his life, the idea of Wilkinson raising that boat out of the Mississippi and, with roundabout pretenses of salvage, appropriating those twenty-three sacks only to find their contents corn, never failed to amuse him.

"We are even with Miller and Wilkinson," he said. "Praise be indeed, to all O'Mallory's saints, that we are even with Wilkinson and Miller."

As for the camlet cloak, Jared threw it around his wife's shoulders, covering her from top to toe.

"Take it, Thankful. You admired it so. Its use for me is past and it belongs to no one."

So Thankful wore it till the edges frayed. Then she cut it down for little Jared, and down again for little Ezra, and still more for little Thankful.

For myself, I gave charge of the *Sentinel* to Jared soon after our New Orleans trip, and fared forth into the unexplored forests beyond us. I pioneered about the wilds of Cincinnati, then toward Vincennes and Missouri, as civili-

## The Man in the Camlet Cloak

zation kept overtaking me. Ah, but the country is not what it once was! The woods and Indians are disappearing, and the gay, inspiriting perils of a frontier life are no more. Resigning myself to the inevitable, I returned to Marietta and settled down to a prosy old age among sedate God-fearing people.

I would I had some further word to add of Eboli for a merry tale should not end with an eternal separation. Poor child, she was a dainty, airy creature, ill adapted to the ways of pioneers. Her flutterings about me for a little space were infinitely delightful—but 'twould be disproportioned cruelty to attach ball and chain to a butterfly, expecting thereby to retain its graceful companionship.



University of California  
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY  
305 De Neve Drive - Parking Lot 17 • Box 951388  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90095-1388

Return this material to the library from which it was borrowed.

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



**A** 000 042 244 4



f Ca  
Regi  
Faci